In Pursuit of an Avant Regionalism

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Submitted towards the fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Architecture Degree.

School of Architecture
University of Hawai‘i

Doctorate Project Committee

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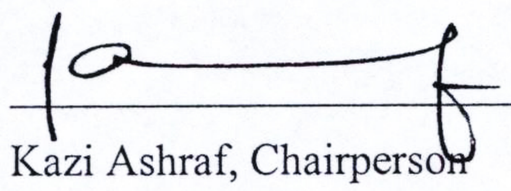
We certify that we have read the Doctorate Project and that, in our opinion, it is satisfactory in scope and quality in fulfillment as a Doctorate Project for the degree of Doctor of Architecture in the School of Architecture, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Doctorate Project Committee



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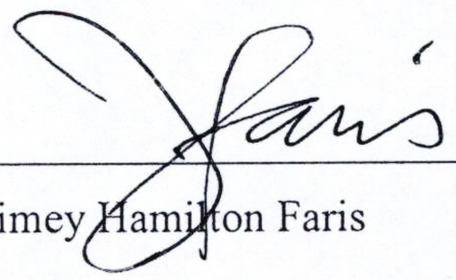

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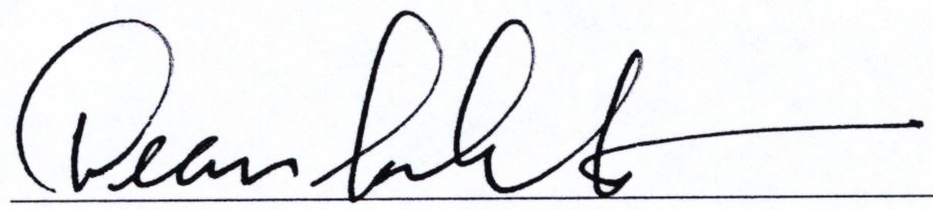

Dean Sakamoto

Abstract

This work begins as a critique of Critical Regionalism and returns to evaluate arguments proposed by Lewis Mumford in regards to Regionalism and "the actual conditions of life."[1] Through this "Pursuit of an Avant Regionalism," I seek to explore architecture and spatial arrangements responding to conditions of multiplicity and flux. In doing this, I present and propose what I term the "Oceanic Phenomenon" as it characterizes and identifies the fluidity and fluctuation of previous and contemporary regional realities. I analyze accepted notions of regionalism, identify its limits, and propose an altered, expanded version of Critical Regionalism.

[1] Lewis Mumford, *The South in Architecture,* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1941), 30.

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Figures

1. Introduction

The pursuit of an Avant Regionalism has a primary critical beginning; it originates from my observation of a particular built environment-- a housing development project in Kahuku, Hawai‘i with its juxtaposition of architectural and spatial practices.

1.1 Kahuku, Hawaii

Kahuku, a small community on the northeast shore of O‘ahu fuels many of my questions about critical regionalism and leads me towards a new interpretation of Regionalism.

As I write today in Kahuku, the sun is shining while looming grey clouds hint at a forecast of rain. From the ocean, the land slowly climbs up to the hills, the infant slopes of the majestic Ko‘olau mountain range traveling to the south. The rural landscape reveals indications of suburban growth, yet Kahuku remains in part, an agricultural town with structures reminiscent of its sugar plantation past. A single highway runs through the town, Kamehameha Highway. Most of the built community is located along this road: housing, agriculture and shrimp farms, small businesses, including a bank, gas station, post office, local food spots and a growing tourist market, the well-known Kahuku High School, the elementary school, police and fire station, hospital and

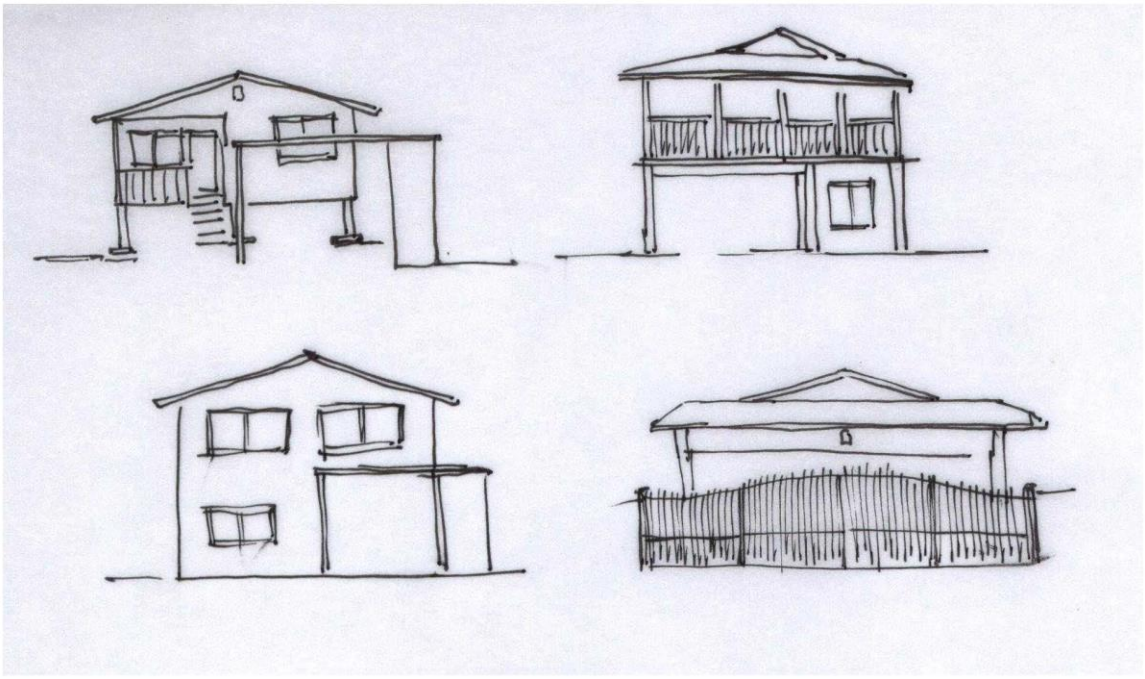
churches, the golf course and Kahuku district park, and toward the north end of its reaches Turtle Bay Resort (Fig. 1). It is here in Kahuku we find a 'mixed plate' of neighbors from multiple cultures, mostly of Polynesian and Pacific Rim origins.

Fig. 1 *Photographs of Kahuku town.* ***(top row) a.*** *Looking toward uptown Kahuku housing development,* ***b****. Kahuku High & Intermediate School,* ***c.*** *Housing in Kahuku Village,* ***(middle row) d.*** *Kahuku Superette,* ***e.*** *Kahuku market,* ***f.*** *Kahuku District Park and Elementary School,* ***(bottom row) g.*** *Gas station,* ***h.*** *Kahuku Sugar Mill shopping area,* ***i.*** *Kahuku hospital.*

In uptown Kahuku, a collage of houses and cars line and intrude upon the streets. In this seemingly unimpressive and architecturally inconsequential housing development and town, I see complexities materialize. It is difficult for the regular passerby to recognize that this neighborhood of homes once all looked the same-- a kind of quasi-suburban affordable housing project nested in rural Kahuku and reminiscent of a not too distant Hawai'i plantation history. However, the houses no longer all look the same, the

development is continually being altered as individual houses and lots are frequently expanded and modified (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

Fig. 2 *(above) Houses in up-town Kahuku* ***Fig. 3*** *(below) Line drawing of houses in up-town Kahuku*



The variety and multiple adaptations of these standardized homes are evident from the street. At first, I viewed the facades superficially and formally. However, upon further observation I realize that many of the houses are expanded beyond the original structure and the use of lot space is re-appropriated. I assume most changes result from expanding families and the need for more space to house the fluidities and flux of people (grandchildren, grandparents, aunties, uncles etc…), a common occurrence in the Pacific. The standardization of the original houses highlight the resultant multiplicity of modification and the dynamic circular pattern of relations, and lead me to consider this occurrence as part of a larger and noteworthy cultural pattern (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5). What are the rearrangements suggesting to us? Is this a type of regional architectural practice?

Fig.4 *House lot showing occupation of space*

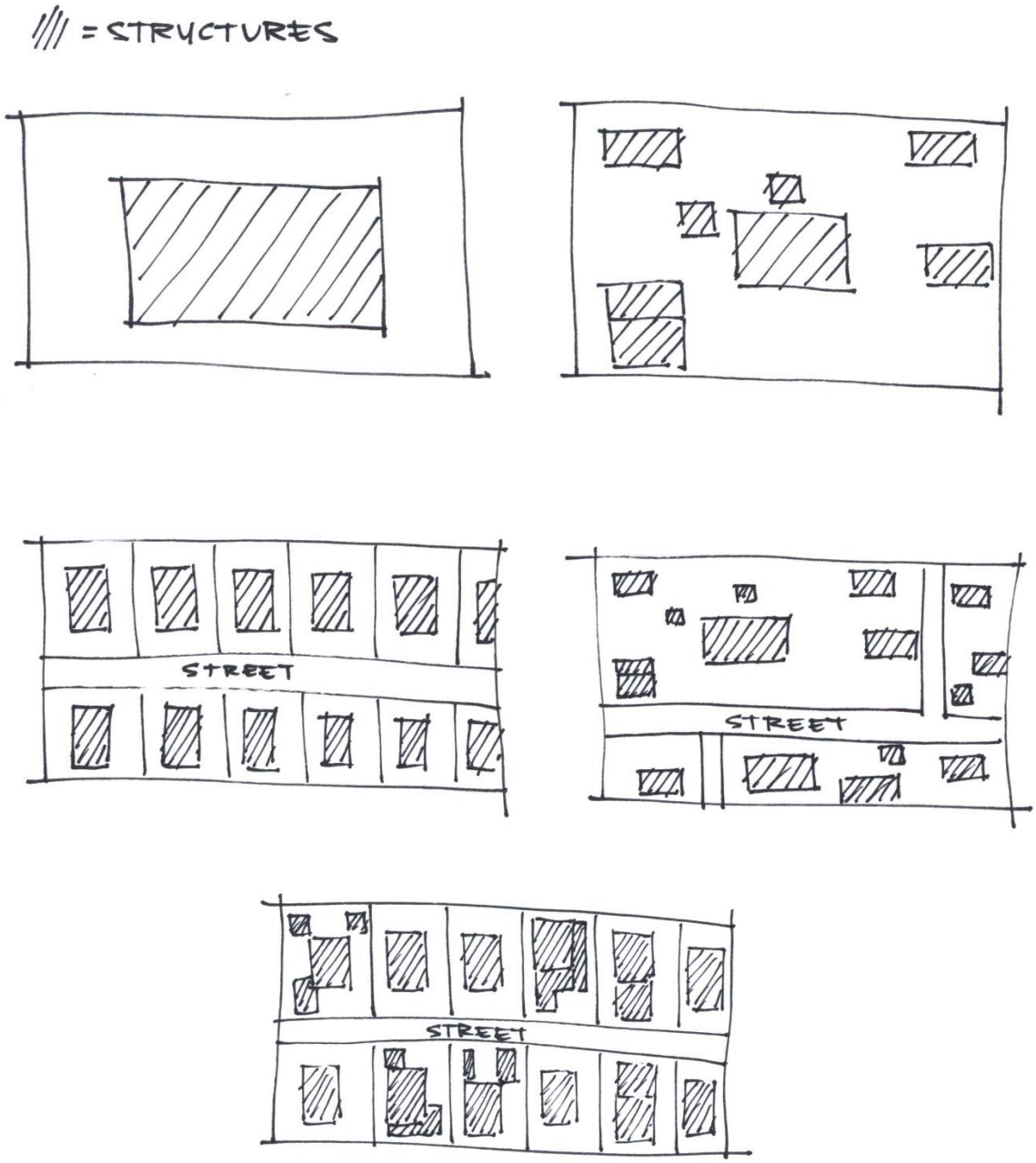


Fig.5 *Diagrams comparing lot arrangements, (top row) Standard lot vs. oceanic lot (adapted from sketch of lot in Vava'u,Tonga) (middle row) Zoomed out street/lot perspective of diagrams above, (left to right) a. standard lots, b. oceanic/Tongan lots, (bottom row) c. Kahuku lots*

The next chapter(s) presents and overview and critique of the discourse of regionalism and critical regionalism. A review of these topics coupled with an altered and enlarged view of the subject may present possibilities wherein we can improve our understanding of the regional realities that are going on in a town like Kahuku, and better understand the regional potential of these patterns and how to accommodate for the architectural and spatial occurrences taking place.

The mundane architectural hybrids and juxtapositions, which silently and unassumingly come into being in Kahuku (and elsewhere), suggest something other than what we know critical regionalist architecture to be. Perhaps, it presents instead an "Avant-Regional" architecture, an expanded interpretation of regionalism.

2. From Regionalism to Critical Regionalism

It is difficult to find a sure definition of regionalism aside from a dictionary description which references the characterization of a particular area, and a critical regionalism, or an architectural regionalist view which seeks to transcend imperializing or globalizing structures by incorporating local elements. In light of the evasiveness of the definition in previous writings on the topic, Vincent Carnizaro presents a compelling contemporary definition in his preface to *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, which alludes to the promise of regionalism and perhaps can assist in expanding the discourse. To paraphrase, regionalism as an architectural discourse encourages the nurturing of local realities (physical conditions and cultural particularities of place) to better attend to and make use "of global concerns and possibilities" architecturally. It opens up prospects of (local/global) interconnectedness and "shared purpose…ecologically, economically, and socially."[2]

It can be supposed that supporting notions of regionalism emerged during the Renaissance and persist in 'vernacular,' or 'local' architecture. Its contemporary rebirth, as pointed out by theorists Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, occurs around the 1930's with Lewis Mumford amongst the most prominent of the modern movement. At this juncture, regionalism arrives in the professional architectural world as a concept of awareness and observation of people and their physical world. The following timeline shows some of the events and influences which surrounded the resurgence of regionalist

[2] Vincent B. Carnizaro, *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition,* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 12.

ideas and advanced modern architecture towards regionalism between the 1930s and 1960s, and into the 1980s (Fig. 6).

The following is a review of prominent regionalism advocates and theorists, and auxiliary supporters of regionalist ideals (Fig. 7). Early in the twentieth century Lewis Mumford, who wrote on topics of modern technology and the built environment,[3] proposed a regional architecture. His suggestion was in response to the modern movement and "the restrictive and void formulas of the so-called International Style."[4] The International School was a branch of the modern movement in architecture, which maintained prominence in the architectural world roughly from the 1920's to the 1970's.[5] This school approached the design of architecture from a top-down, imposing, imperialist, and universalizing stance. Although Mumford continued to be in favor of modernist principles, he sought after a ground-up architecture, which incorporated the role of community as a necessary and guiding force in regional architecture. His aim was to create balance between the local and the global.[6] He did not see the local and global as two separate opposing forces, rather, as entities that engage with and can benefit from each other.

> For Mumford, regionalist architecture, without rejecting, 'the universal order of the machine,' must accommodate the 'human' order by incorporating 'those social and esthetic elements that bind people sentimentally to their homes and

[3] Dean Sakamoto, Karla Britton and Diana Murphy, ed., *Hawaiian Modern: The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 127.
[4] Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, "Lewis Mumford's Regionalism," in *Design Book Review 19* (1991): 20-25.
[5] "The International Style," *American Architecture Series*, accessed April 23, 2014, http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/architecture/international-style.htm#decline.
[6] Liane Lefaivre, "How Lewis Mumford Rethought Regionalist Precedents", in *Understanding Meaningful Environments*, (Amsterdam, NLD: IOS Press, 2008), 52.

their regions' while working toward the 'brotherhood of man' and a 'better social order.'[7]

Mumford was in favor of "redefining the meaning of adapting the landscape in order to deal with the new realities" of life. He stressed that "regional forms" which strive to meet "the actual conditions of life…make people feel at home in their environment," and not only accommodate the physical realities of a place, but also the cultural conditions of a region.[8] With this focus on the actualities of life, culture and identity can be seen as mutable and conditional and a type of "modern, self-reflexive regionalism,"[9] which can address "user's needs" and guide the "social nature of the production of architecture."[10]

Other primary voices of regionalism emerged around the late 1970s and 1980s in response to changes and perceived failures of modernism and postmodernism. Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre revived the term regionalism as a means for discussing "the modern-anti-modern struggle" and proposed it "as a tool of analysis." They attached "critical" to Mumford's regionalism to better articulate his topics of local and global, and to express the movement's refocused ability to pass judgment on imposing global influences and regionalism itself.

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[7] Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Critical Regionalism and Spanish Architecture Today," *Interchange* 2 (1989): 21.
[8] Liane Lefaivre, "How Lewis Mumford Rethought Regionalist Precedents", *Understanding Meaningful Environments,* (Amsterdam, NLD: IOS Press, 2008), 55.
[9] Eggener, Keith L., "Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism," *Journal of Architectural Education* (19840), Vol. 55, No. 4 (May, 2002): 228.
[10] Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Critical Regionalism and Spanish Architecture Today," *Interchange* 2 (1989): 20.

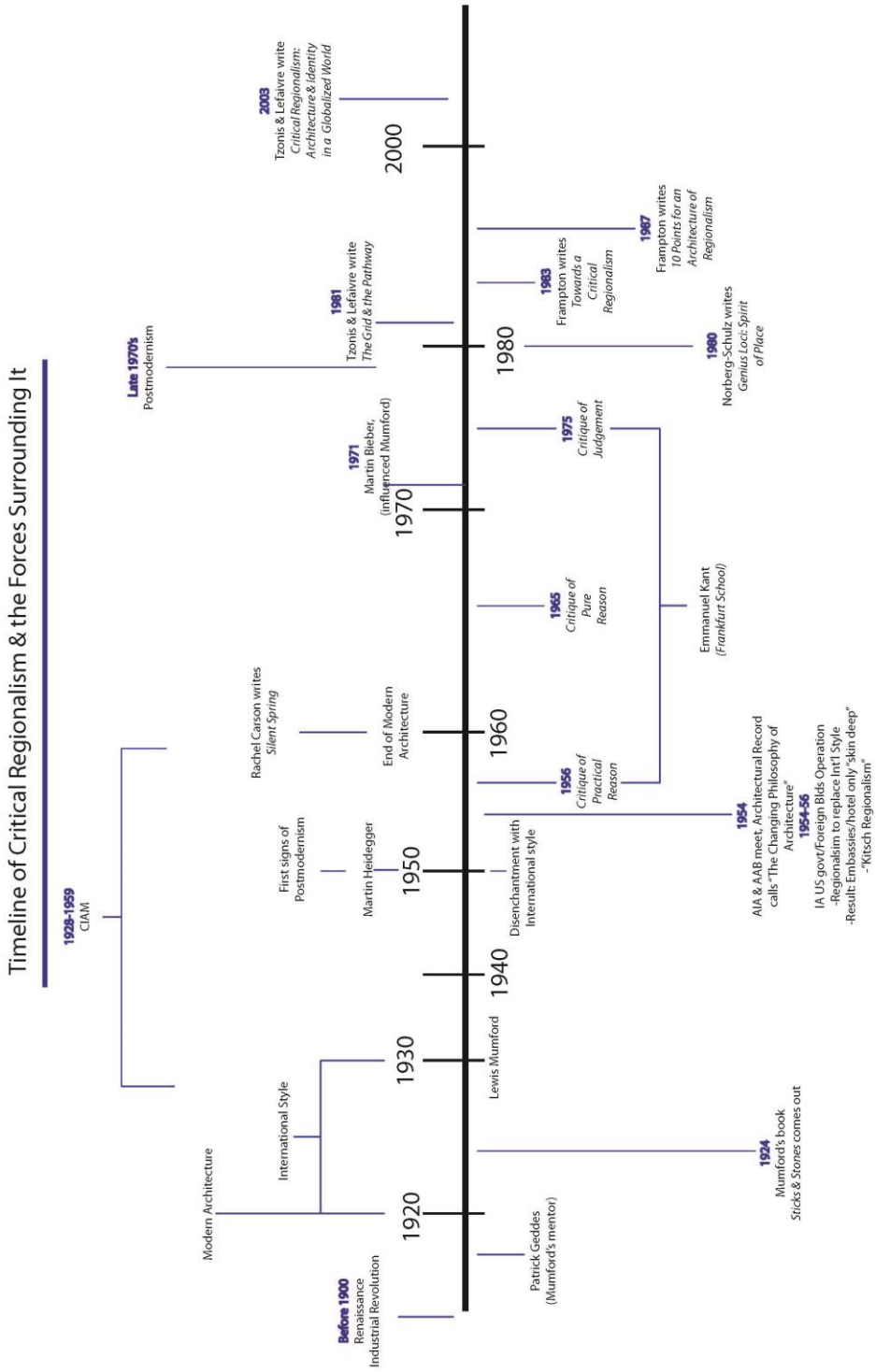

Fig. 6 *Timeline of critical regionalism*

Fig. 7 *Theorists and themes of critical regionalism*

Architecture has often been tied to political ventures, dictated identities and dominant narratives. To Tzonis and Lefaivre a "regionalist architecture incorporates regional elements in order to represent aspirations of liberation from a power perceived as alien and illegitimate."[11] The 'critical' aspect of a critical regionalism sought to address the origins, constraints and conflicts in architecture related to "globalization and international intervention," and "local identity and the desire for ethnic insularity."[12] Their regionalism critiqued the outside imposing global forces that threatened identity and simultaneously provided an approach to alleviate oppressive and imposing architectural formulas upon local spatial, social and cultural identity.[13]

From ancient Greece Tzonis and Lefaivre explored the 'fission and fusion' of cultures and practices as an inherent part of that identity and the idea of architectural elements as enforcers of identity. From Vitruvius, a roman architect, they garnered that, "natural causes and human rationality were to determine architectural form."[14] They explored a 'picturesque regionalism' of the 17th and 18th centuries, which created images of an ideal regional topography and landscape as articulated in the paintings of the time. They also explored a "historicist regionalism" which expressed a common identity through architectural references to building facades and edifices,[15] and a "romantic regionalism" or a "commercial regionalism."[16]

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[11] Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, *Architecture of Regionalism in the Age of Globalisation,* (New York: Routledge, 2012).
[12] Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, *Critical Regionalism: Architecture and Identity in a Globalized World,* (Munich: Prestel, 2003), 10.
[13] Ibid., 11.
[14] Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Critical Regionalism and Spanish Architecture Today," *Interchange* 2 (1989): 10-14.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, *Critical Regionalism: Architecture and Identity in a Globalized World,* (Munich: Prestel, 2003), 15, 18.

After collecting precedents from varying architectural influences, Tzonis and Lefaivre proposed a rethinking of architecture sensitive to a project's "physical, social, and cultural constraints" and "sustaining diversity while benefiting from universality."[17] To accompany their discussion of critical regionalism and the above objectives, Tzonis and Lefaivre sought to work towards an architecture guided by the natural qualities of place versus an imposed universal set of rules.

As part of this discussion, architectural theorist and critic Kenneth Frampton states that culture and civilization are caught in meaningless expressions of "instrumental reason" (working towards a solution) rather than a formation of "collective psycho-social reality." He reveals that as architecture works towards a solution, it can gravitate towards becoming a commodity rather than a functional, meaningful articulation of people and place. He concludes that the shortcomings of the supposed liberating modernism movement resulted from the "domination of mass culture by the media industry" and the limit it placed on the Avant-garde's promise of working towards a solution. [18]

Frampton's earlier writings emphasize critical regionalism's critical nature and use as a form of resistance,[19] to resist mass consumerism of universal architectural forms.[20] He presents critical regionalism as a balancing intermediary of the local and the global, the self and the other, and he shifts to emphasis to the 'local' and 'modern' as

[17] Ibid., 20.
[18] Ibid., 17, 19.
[19] Eggener, Keith L., "Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism," *Journal of Architectural Education* (19840), Vol. 55, No. 4 (May, 2002): 229.
[20] Frampton, Kenneth, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *the Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Post Modern Culture,* ed. Hal Foster (New York: New York Press, 1998), 28-29, 16, 24-25.

building, site, culture and universally controlled and provided systems[21] merge to form architectural solutions.

Frampton's exploration of regionalism as a resisting force emerged in the 1980s when society's circumstances were different. His projections for the future of regionalism, allude, via Ricoeur, to a single story, the need for resistance, and the uncertainty of an Avant or advanced position. Ricoeur argues,

> No one can say what will become of our civilization when it has really met different civilizations by means other than the show of conquest and domination. However, we have to admit that this encounter has not yet taken place at the level of an authentic dialogue. That is why we are in a kind of lull or interregnum in which we can no longer practice the dogmatism of a single truth and in which we are not yet capable of conquering the skepticism into which we have stepped.[22]

At the time Frampton joined the critical regionalism discussion, society was still in the midst of two primary dogmas: socialism and capitalism. Since then there has been an unraveling of socialism and a re-articulation of a capitalism based on the nation-state to a condition of complex global flows.

In contrast to his earlier writings, his recent writings suggest more of a Mumfordian willingness to approach the "myths and realities of the present situation,"[23] and more clearly seek after the promise of regionalism. He acknowledges the role of a

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[21] Ibid., 26-27.
[22] Ibid., 21-22.
[23] Kenneth Frampton, "Ten Points on an Architecture of Regionalism: A Provisional Polemic," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition,* ed. Vincent B. Carnizaro (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 375.

changed capitalism, the confused idea of progress, the value placed on the "ebb and flow" of the global economy, the commodification of goods and lands, and the diminished probability of creating architecture of cultural significance and public values. [24] As the commodification of architecture assumed a role of universalizing architectural landscapes, Frampton returns to an emphasis on engagement with site (the architectonic and topographical) to slow the mass perpetuation of consumer architecture (the picturesque and sceno-graphic). His strategy aims to foreground the creation of regional place-form which then "devotes itself… (to) bounded domains and tactile presences." He further emphasizes the individualizing and grounding role of site and topography as opposed to the pathetic suburban proliferation of free-standing objects placed upon the land.[25] While Frampton's example of critical regionalist architecture proves a valid solution and rejection of the architectural 'sitelessness' of suburbia, both instances convey a similar relationship of architecture and land; "a domain that is clearly bounded."[26] As I review the limits of critical regionalism, I discover that here too, (to reference Ricoeur via Frampton) a single truth, a single story is being upheld: A "land-locked" view of regionalism.

The identification of regional views as the land-locked "single truth", which I will address in the next section, is a first step to confronting "conquest and domination"[27] and its lasting influence upon the contemporary views of architecture, and bringing to life a

[24] Ibid., 376.
[25] Ibid., 378.
[26] Frampton, Kenneth, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *the Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Post Modern Culture,* ed. Hal Foster (New York: New York Press, 1998), 21-22.
[27] Frampton, Kenneth, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *the Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Post Modern Culture,* ed. Hal Foster (New York: New York Press, 1998), 21-22.

picture of civilization resulting from dynamic flows and fluctuations of people and culture.

Frampton's writings continue to vacillate between the idea of the local and global in dialogue, and rootedness in site (grounding the tectonic in topography and place through the natural and tactile). He simultaneously states that the limits and promises of regionalism must not be restricted to locality and climate, but can be expanded by returning to the discourse of learning and significance of the client.[28]

As Frampton's writings suggest, the paper returns to architectural education and research in search of the potential promise of regionalism. In his article "Ten Points on an Architecture of Regionalism: A Provisional Polemic," he argues that in relation to our market economy (our reality), "the scope of architectural activity available to the potential 'regionalist' is *interstitial* rather than *global* in nature."[29] Frampton concludes this article remarking that this conditional reality places regionalism at the interstitial middle ground between the "post-modern" positions; historicism and the avant-garde.[30] However, I propose that the interstitial he refers to, the spaces that "ebb and flow" between the whole, hold greater possibilities for this discourse than simply an intermediary position between formal styles of architecture.

The following figures present examples of critical regionalist architecture, their location, use and reasons why they are considered regional architecture (Fig. 8 and Fig. 9). The majority of the classification for regionalism relate to how the architecture and

[28] Kenneth Frampton, "Ten Points on an Architecture of Regionalism: A Provisional Polemic," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition,* ed. Vincent B. Carnizaro (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 380.
[29] Ibid., 376.
[30] Ibid., 385.

site appropriately characterize or integrate materials and elements of the surrounding environment (landscape and structures), as a means to mediate the impact of global systems, materials and construction technologies and assert a local/ regional character. However, in accomplishing that objective, the regional character, or ‘regional-ness’ of the architecture revolves primarily around its ability to characterize its site. Further, the example of architecture along with the previous review of critical regionalism reveal that its foundation is situated upon and informed by a land-locked view of region.

Yuhu Elementary School Expansion
Lijian, Yunnan, China
2003

Architect: *Xiaodong Li*

Project info: *School*

Why Regional?

-Community constructed
-Responds to local vernacular, (folklore, materiality, geomancy, ecology, architecture)
-Social/building conversation

Hageneiland
Ypenburg, The Netherlands
1997-2001

Architect: *MVRDV*

Project info: *Housing*

Why Regional?

-Form archetype
-Social regional

Hebrew Union College
Jerusalem, Israel
1976-88

Architect: *Moshe Safdie*

Project info: *Educational/civic*

-Outside olds city of Jerusalem
-Classroom, library, research institute, museum, hostel

Why Regional?

-Local hewn limestone
-Links with city
-material
-form mimics landscape
-familiar forms
-color
-vegetation
-Connects with outdoors
-Courtyards
-Indoor/outdoor space
-Natural light
-Circulation
-Views/ connection

La Granja Escalator
Toledo, Spain
1997-2000

Architect: *Jose Antonio Martinez Lapena & Elias Torres Tur*

Project info: *Connection*

-Minimize toporaphy defacing
-Maximize access to centre

Why Regional?

-Harmonizing material
-Color
-Minimal impact on site
-Integrated with site
-Views/ connections

Siege Social de Total Energie La Tour-de-Salvagny
Lyon, France
1998-99

Architect: *Jacques Ferrier & Jean-Francios Irissou*

Project info: *-2 factories*
-1 home

Why Regional?

-Local building type
-Vernacular building form
-Things seen everyday
-Visual culture

Fig.8 *Table of critical regionalist architecture*

Ysios Winery
Leguardia, Alava, Spain
1998-2001

Architect: *Santiago Calatrava*

Project info: *Winery*

Why Regional?

-Sensitive to landscape
-Earth
-Snowcapped mtn ridge
-Views/connecting with landscape

Liljestrand House
Makiki Heights, Honolulu, Hawaii

Architect: *Vladimir Ossipoff*

Project info: *-Family residence*

Why Regional?

-Organized based on topography, natural features
-landscape terrace
-angled mb to trees
-Orientation
-Fenestration/ventilation
-Daylight/shade
-Local materials

Taivallahti Church
Helsinki, Finland
1968-69

Architect: *Timo & Tumamo Suomalainen*

Project info: *Church*

Why Regional?

-Connects to regional history of religious culture
-Natural materials from site
-Rock
-Insulation
-Acoustics
-Natural light

Saynatsalo Town Hall
Saynatsalo, Finland
1948-52

Architect: *Alvar Aalto*

Project info: *Town Hall*

Why Regional?

-Naked materials
-dark red brick
-wood
-copper
-Natural light
-Blend of natural and constructed
-Massing of forms with landscape
-Balance of open and closed
-Experience with place: continues connection with space, light, outdoor simultaeneously
-"Humanized" post war architecture

Tjibaou Cultural Centre
Noumea, New Caledonia
1993-98

Architect: *Renzo Piano*

Project info: *Cultural Center*

Why Regional?

-Analogy/interpretation (arrangement/form)
-Significant site/location
-Preserve and sustain existing culture- not a replication or remnant
-Life of materials, aging, weathering to resemble surround
-Captures prevailing winds
-Traditional constr. methods
-Layout related to cultural patterns of life

Fig.9 *Continued… Table of critical regionalist architecture*

2.1 A land-locked view of Regionalism

This section acknowledges the aforementioned perspectives of regionalism as they relate to architectural thought and practice, and identifies and elaborates on a prevailing dominant narrative of regionalism, which I will hereto refer to as a land-locked view of regionalism.

The concept of region, at least from an architectural standpoint, often relates to landscape as derived from the German term *landschaftsbild,* which "refers to the appearance of an area, not to the area itself."[31] The geographic location that typically characterizes region in the critical regionalism discussion pertains to a specific enclosed and land defined area—an area in which architectural design and planning become situated and defined. While it may not be a deliberate intention, the primary discourse of regionalism expresses a land-locked view, and dominates the prevailing critical discussion and practice of regional architecture. It perpetuates a dominant narrative that privileges "site" and landform as the predominant expression of localism.

To denote something or some place as regional is to classify it. The prominent view of region is often coterminous with landscape. Landscape can be a commodity: fixed, complex, and geographic, referring to "things on the land," whereas "many other commodities circulate more freely." Landscape may also refer to its "morphology- the shape and structure of place" and its "representation, both as an art and as a complex system of meanings." "Landscape is also ideology, it's a specific way of seeing…it

[31] Richard H. Jackson and Lloyd E. Hudman, *Cultural Geography: People, Places and Environment,* (St. Paul: West Publishing Company, 1990), 30-32.

signifies the look of the land, (and) it also signifies a way of looking at the land."[32] In summary, the landscape is about form, the interrelation of forms in structuring place and meaning, and how we see place. A critical regionalism maintains a relationship with landscape and classifies a region based upon the form, structure, function and meaning of physical landscape.

This term landscape, which emerged during the Renaissance, also has ties with capitalism and continues to carry with it the perspective of land ownership and land as commodity. From an architectural standpoint, the term often is defined by "those who control the landscape" rather than "those who belong to it."[33]

In the book *Inscribed Landscapes: Marking and Making Place,* Bruno David and Meredith Wilson demonstrate one instance of a land-locked view. An initial glance at this title identifies its key assumptions. To inscribe is to "write or carve (words or symbols) on something, especially as a formal or permanent record," or to "draw (a figure) within another so that their boundaries touch but do not intersect."[34] This term indicates a view of thinking about landscapes as bounded, formal, and independent (and perhaps even isolated) spaces which highlight an individuality of place. The book assumes that regionalism and landscape are coterminous with site, and in assuming so, it perpetuates a land-locked view of regionalism.[35]

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[32] Don Mitchell, "Landscape," in *Cultural Geography,* ed. David Atkinson et al. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 49, 50.
[33] Ibid., 50.
[34] "Inscribe," Oxford Dictionaries, Accessed Feb 19, 2014, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/inscribe
[35] Bruno David and Meredith Wilson, ed., *Inscribed Landscapes: Marking and Making Place,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 76.

2.2 Traditional regionalism is not enough

In line with what regionalist writer Lewis Mumford proposed in the 1940s about regional realities, our contemporary regional conditions suggest a "global cultural complexity."[36] He posited that the future of human development is tied to the "cultural complexities" and "hybridization of cultures"[37] that were evident in Honolulu in the 1940's, and which are evermore present in the regional realities in most of the world today.

Even though Mumford alluded to the importance of cultural hybrids for Honolulu's design, he never really approached it since he subsequently returned to the environmental with his design proposals focused on the natural qualities of place. I wish to identify his retreat, challenge existing narratives of place, and note the perpetual return of proponents of regionalism and critical regionalism to land-locked principles, the dominant narrative.

Critical regionalism, as an extension of regionalism, perpetuates this pattern. The notion of a return to boundaries, privileges site and prompts the questions, what is regionalism and what is regional architecture in a globalized setting? And what role do cultural realities play in the definition of the region as a definer of space, place and architecture?

Traditional land-locked notions of regionalism are insufficient to address changing global realties wherein regions are "transitional and ambiguous" and

[36] David Atkinson, ed., et al. "Borders and Boundaries," *Cultural Geography,* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 154.
[37] Dean Sakamoto, et al., *Hawaiian Modernism: The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff, (*New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 130.

"boundaries are problematic"[38] because mobility and multiplicity abound. Nevertheless, "boundaries can also be seen to generate theoretical questions that offer possibilities for developing a more critical cultural geography"[39] which extends beyond bounded notions of region.

The following example illustrates how real this dominant view is. In a recent conversation with an architect, I was explaining my ideas of using Kahuku to explore the concept of cultural regionalism. However, the comments shared in response simply served to turn me back toward a perspective focused on the natural qualities of place. It made me think, if this what we are confined to and if we can ever extend beyond this narrative And is the land-locked regional view, so embedded and encoded in our perspective that an alternative is difficult to see and attain?

In consideration of the land-locked view as a proponent of site and landscape, the following sequence of reasoning offers a potential representation of the situation and potential furthering of regional understanding.

*If, **LANDSCAPE** → is → **REGION** then **REGION** → is → **LANDSCAPE***

*If, **LANDSCAPE** → can be → a **COMMODITY** (fixed, complex, and geographic)*

*Then **REGION** → can also be → a **COMMODITY** (fixed, complex, and geographic)*

*However, if **REGION** is viewed as > (more than) just **LANDSCAPE** and there are many **COMMODITIES** which **CIRCULATE MORE FREELY***

*Then **REGION** (as an alternate commodity) → can also **CIRCULATE MORE FREELY**[40]*

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[38] David Atkinson, ed., et al. "Borders and Boundaries," *Cultural Geography*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 153.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Don Mitchell, "Landscape," in *Cultural Geography*, ed. David Atkinson et al. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 49, 50.

To understand this potential of region, I turn to Oceania, a place where I see people, goods, and culture circulate more freely and form the hybrids we witness in Kahuku. The following chapter presents a review and observations of Oceania, an alternate life reality and narrative that offer an alternative to the land-locked view of the regional.

3. The Oceanic Phenomenon

In 1993, Epeli Hau'ofa revitalized a bottom-up view of Oceania using the metaphor a "sea of islands," as the pattern of the Pacific rather than separated and isolated "islands in a far sea."[41] His metaphor supports realities of an Oceanic landscape/seascape that has been and continues to be a pathway for travel, a tradition of mobility and interconnectedness rooted in social networks, relations, and kin ties where flow and flux characterize peoples and cultural principles of the Pacific region.

An observation of principles and processes, which have persisted across time in the Pacific and amongst Pacific peoples, encourages an exploration of the spatial and socio-cultural dynamics of its oceanic seascape. I use the term Oceanic Phenomenon to express the collective and rematerializing dynamics of this expansive place and its peoples. The Oceanic Phenomenon articulates the movement of peoples and their ideologies of identity based upon the reality and perpetuity of their interrelations and interconnectivity. This phenomenon supports a human geography, and is a point of departure which provides a socio-anthropological perspective in spatial terms.

[41] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of Islands," in *We Are the Ocean,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 31.

3.1 Oceania's Physical Landscape

Those whose world center's around continental life may find in the Pacific physically unparalleled landmasses. This oceanic world presents a contrast to a conception of life and region informed by large land formations and geographic delineations with minimal contact with the sea. Many visitors to the Pacific are conditioned to focus on the concrete and static manifestations of the land as a representation of a viable world, a world, which becomes defined by its edges, even its border to view the sea. This view is similar to critical regionalism and the focus placed upon land and site. The reference, "islands in a far sea"[42] reveals this view and framework, and many classifications of Oceania adhere to this conception. While the intent of this paper seeks an alternative articulation of this region and regionalism in general, I will provide a brief overview of Oceania using existing regional classifiers.

Oceania covers a large expanse of the Pacific Ocean, extending 65,000,000 square miles (168,000,000 km^2), and "encompasses a greater area than all the of the world's land surfaces combined," covering nearly one-third of the globe (Fig. 10). The ocean is often portrayed as a barrier because "the possibilities for natural diffusion across this vast ocean are limited" and the ocean "has prevented the spread of most types of terrestrial life."[43] Conversely, the ocean can be viewed "as a link between lands that are thousands of miles apart."[44] We now know "that the cultural, biological, and linguistic patterns characteristic of Oceania (and not just Polynesia) are far from random. They are highly

[42] Ibid.
[43] Tom L. McKnight, "The Pacific Setting," in *Oceania: The Geography of Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands,* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1995), 1.
[44] Ibid., 2.

structured and, despite the complexities of their patterning, display regular correlations and concordances. This is precisely because they reflect a real history of human movements or migration into the Pacific, and of dispersal or diaspora over its many islands (Fig. 11). That reality that such movements must have occurred, and were responsible for regularities in cultural patterning, was only roughly grasped by the pioneering ethnographers and linguists of the early twentieth century."[45]

These Oceanic classifications evolved from continental men whose view of Oceania as "islands in a far sea" led them to "draw imaginary lines across the sea, making the colonial boundaries that confined ocean peoples to tiny spaces for the first time."[46] This act isolated people, restricted free travel and thus "transform(ed) a once boundless world into the Pacific Island states and territories that we know today."[47] These boundaries were formed based upon perceived similarities of language, culture and genotype,[48] and may reference primary patterns of interaction, exchange and the circulation of "wealth and people with their skills and arts."[49] Less intensive patterns of exchange occurred beyond these oceanic borders.[50]

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[45] Patrick Vinton Kirch, *On the Road of the Winds: An Archaeological History of the pacific Islands before European Contact*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 307.
[46] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of islands," in *We Are the Ocean*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 31, 32.
[47] Ibid., 34.
[48] Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 23, 27.
Patrick Vinton Kirch, *On the Road of the Winds: An Archaeological History of the Pacific Islands before European Contact*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 305-7.
[49] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of islands," in *We Are the Ocean*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 33.
[50] Ibid.

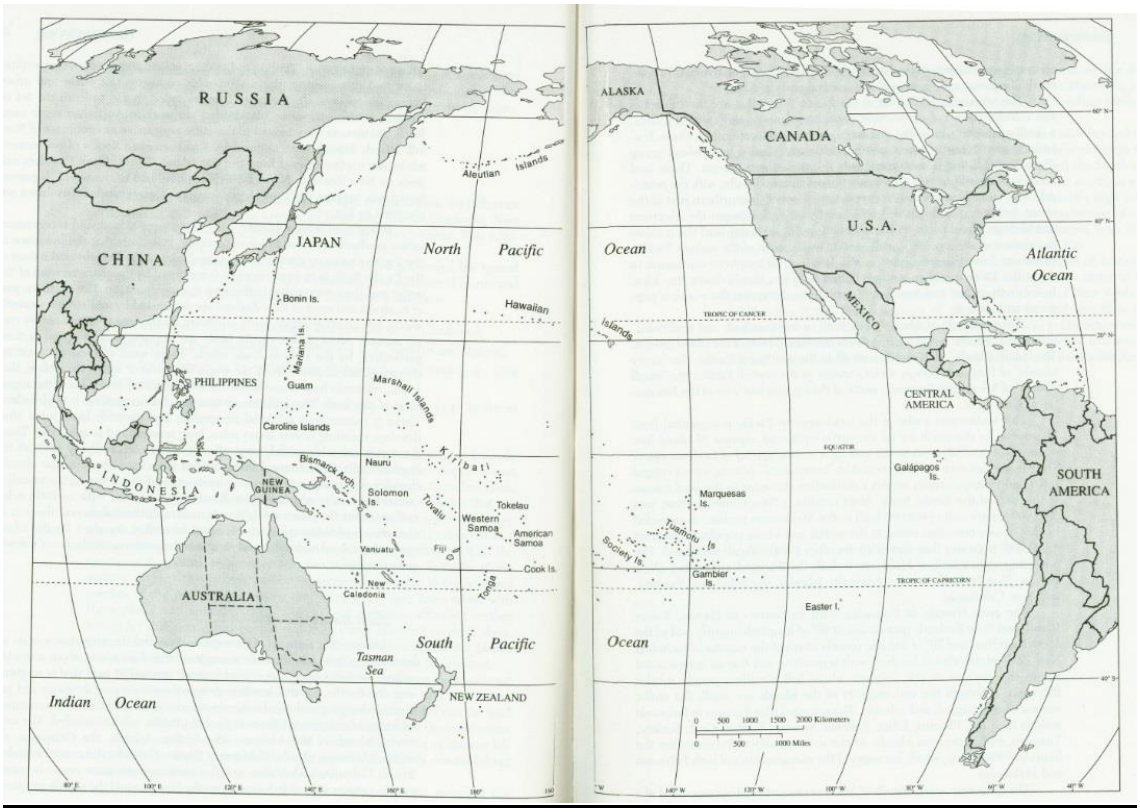


Fig. 10 *The Pacific Setting*

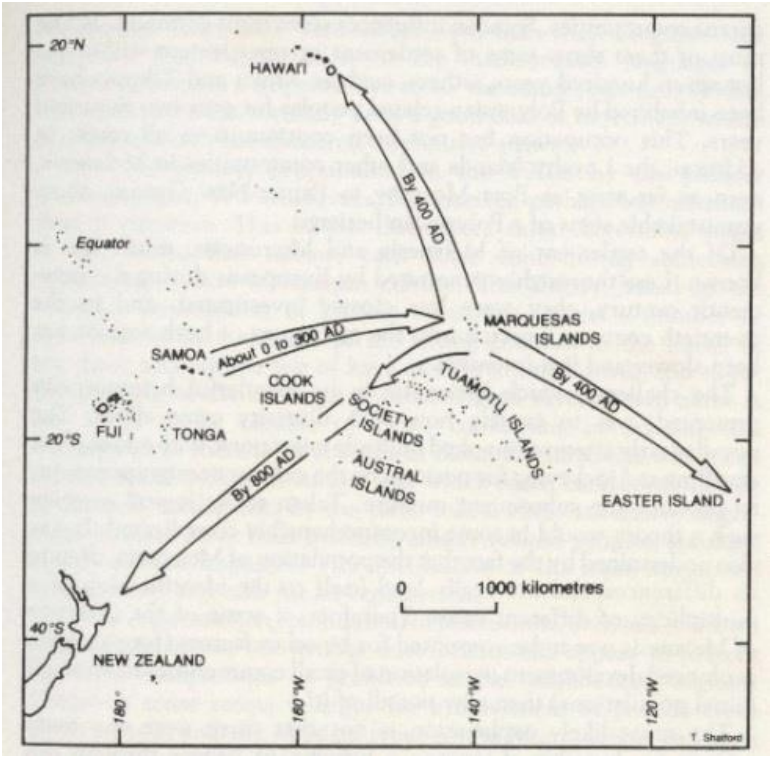


Fig. 11 *Map of Polynesian Migrations*

These lands are commonly categorized into three primary areas, Polynesia (from Greek *poly*, 'many' + *nesos*, 'island'), Micronesia (from Greek *mikros*, 'small'), and Melanesia (from Greek *melas*, 'black')[51] which include a more than 20,000 islands[52] of varying type and size scattered across an enormous expanse of sea from north to south and from the Pacific Rim to the Americas (Fig. 12). These terms, or regional descriptors reflect a Western gaze. Two of the three identifying Oceanic groups, Polynesia and Micronesia, reference a land based orientation characteristic of Western, continental culture, the other Melanesia-- clearly suggests a racist view of Oceania.

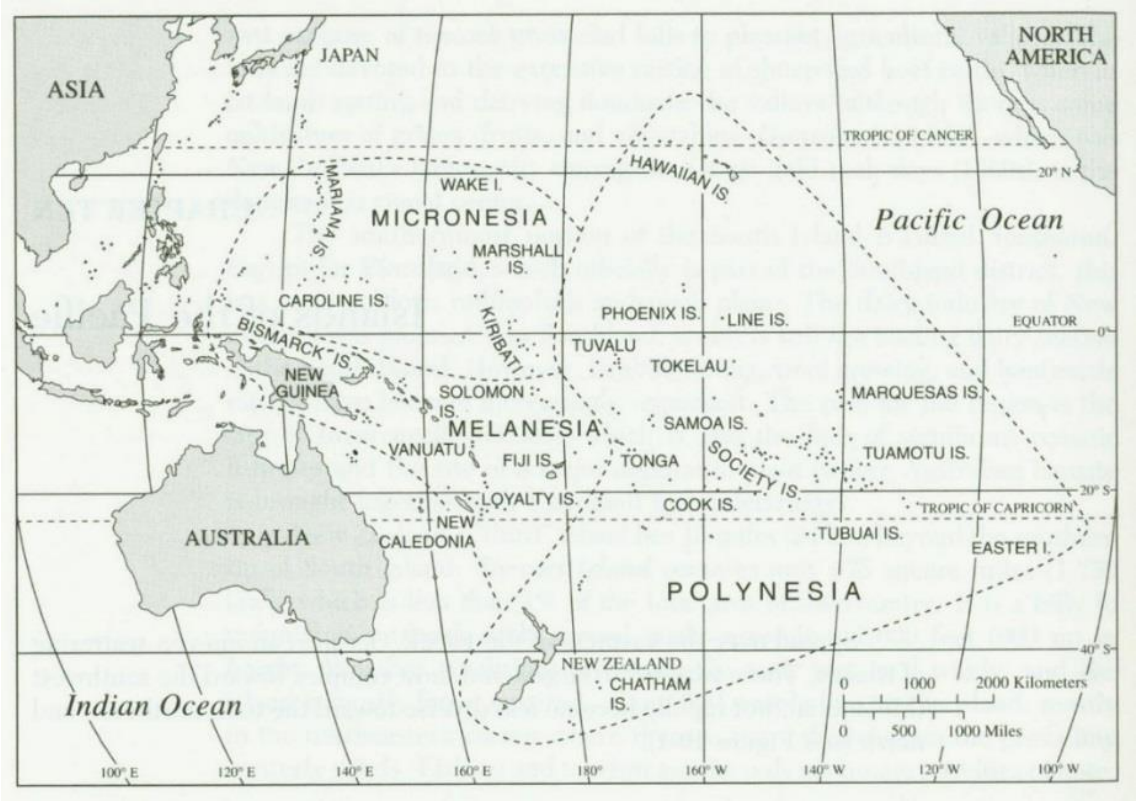


Fig. 12 *Culture Realms of the Pacific*

[51] Douglas L. Oliver, *Native Cultures of the Pacific Islands,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 26.
[52] Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands,* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), xvi.

3.2 A Sea of Islands

Epeli Hau'ofa's article "Our Sea of Islands" in the compilation *We Are the Ocean: Selected Works*, provides a perspective which leads to a rethinking of Oceania and assists in articulating the term "Oceanic Phenomenon." Hau'ofa counters the imposed perception of Oceania based upon the sum of its landmasses, and even the somewhat narrow focus on the term 'Pacific Islands.' The world and life of the Pacific is not bounded by the common illustration Westerners or Europeans have given it, as "islands in a far sea," or lands separated from each other. Rather, the phrase "a sea of islands" (Fig. 13) highlights the concept of the ocean and the inherent and characteristic flow and flux of both the ocean and people moving throughout the Pacific, continuously interacting with each other. This Oceanic perspective presents a precursor to the realities of globalization, and offers support to how I will later define Avant-Regionalism. In accomplishing this, the Oceanic Phenomenon presents an analogous relationship with globalization and an altered view of regionalism.

Fig.13 *Map of Oceania representing "a sea of islands"*

Western discovery and colonization of the Pacific led to the characterization outlined above of individual islands, separated and segregated by a large, expansive ocean. Under this view and in contemporary times they become "too small…too poor…and too isolated from the centers of economic growth…to be able to rise above their present condition of dependence."[53] This conception of size and influence fails to depict reality and is dissident from the experience that Oceanic peoples, cultures, patterns and movements display. This misconception stems from a comparison between landmasses, continents and islands. This comparison highlights the relative smallness of

[53] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of islands," in *We Are the Ocean*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 28, 29.

islands and their distance from each other. While Oceania and its divisive terminologies of place have been constructed by outsiders, "it remains vital to understand (that) the cultures of the nineteenth century (and onward) are the outcomes of longer-term histories, of Islanders' voyages, in literal and metaphoric senses."[54] For centuries, explorers and Western projections have categorized Oceania as a group of restricted "islands in a far sea."[55] However, when the focus is redirected to relationships and the ocean as a connective link, rather than barrier, a different conception emerges.

In Oceania, *moana*, the sea or ocean, is and has been a familiar place, a great network for connection, transference, and sharing culture and values. While "there were many reasons for…the greatest migration of one people in the history of the planet… it appears…that exploring and colonizing had simply become a vital part of Pacific Islanders' cultural heritage," which produced refined navigational achievements and sensibilities,[56] and "the spirit to traverse even the few large gaps that separated their island groups."[57] Oceania's cultural history of movement, interconnectivity, networks of exchange and transference "is underpinned by ancestral affinities"[58] and has led to many similarities but also extraordinary diversity, hybridity, and difference.[59] The stories of the gatherings and travelling's of island peoples historically and contemporarily can be found through oral traditions, blood ties, and kin connections[60] and is evidenced through

[54] Peter Brunt et al. *Art In Oceania: A New History,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 13.
[55] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of islands," in *We Are the Ocean,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 31.
[56] Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands,* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 34-5.
[57] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of islands," in *We Are the Ocean,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 32.
[58] Peter Brunt et al. *Art in Oceania: A New History,* (New haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 22.
[59] Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands,* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 40-49.
[60] Ibid., 34.

language, relationships, economy, material culture and social practices as shown in Fig. 14 and I.C. Campbell's comparative charts in Fig. 15, Fig. 16 and Fig. 17.

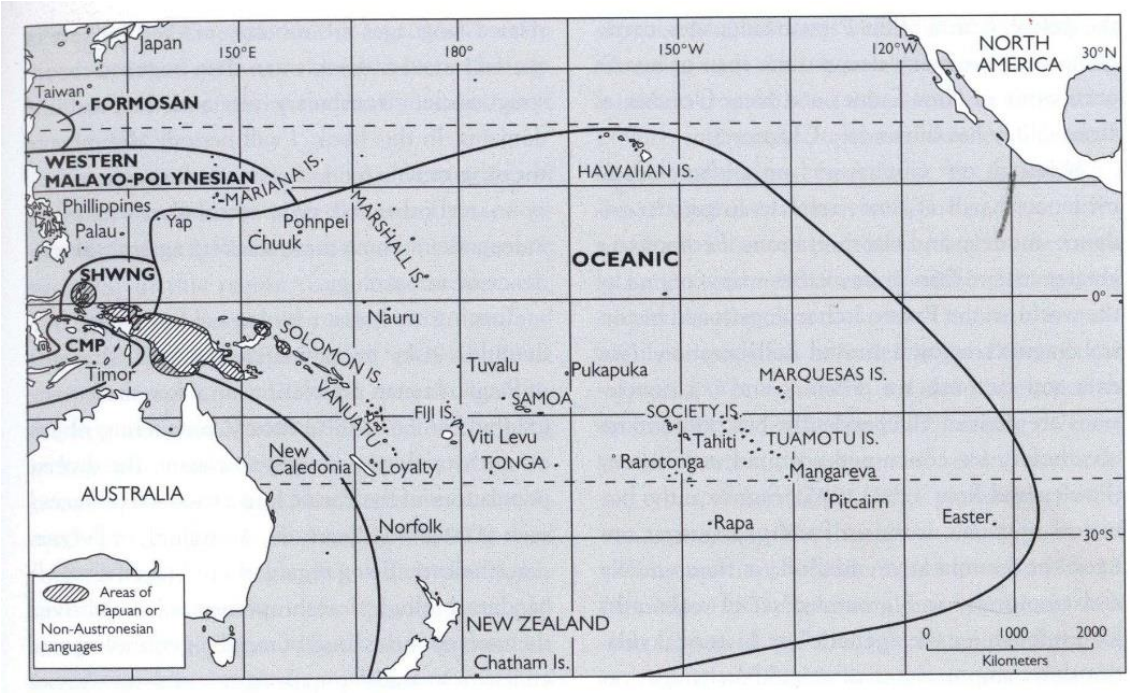
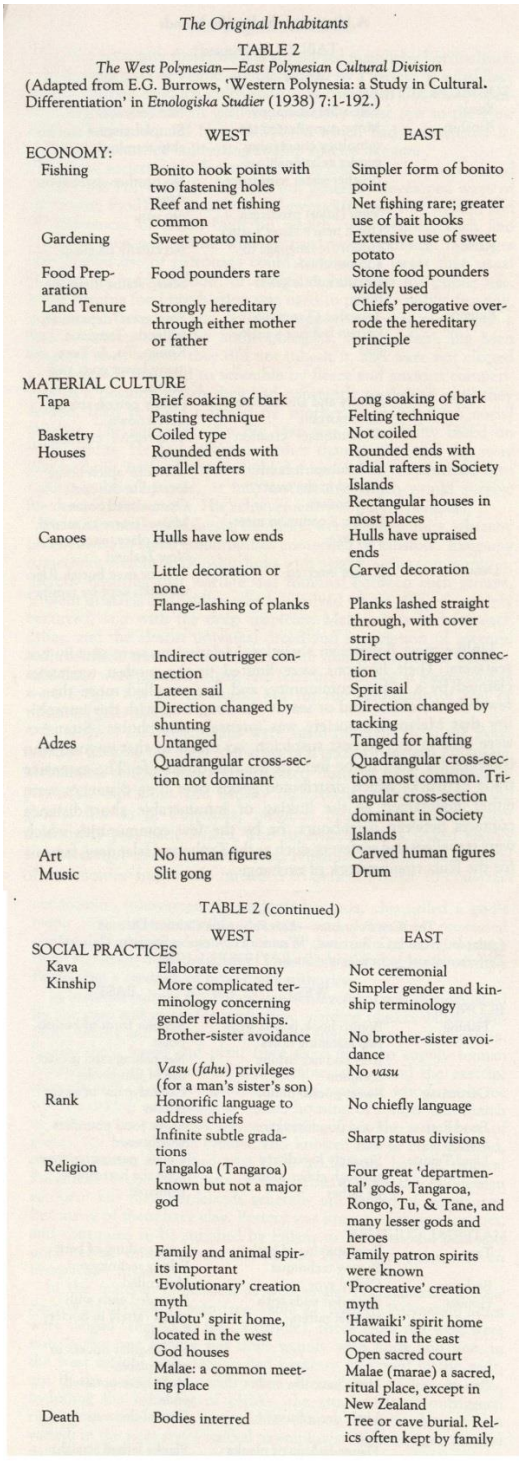


Fig. 14 *The distribution of Austronesian languages in Oceania.*

English	Tonga	Samoa	Tahiti	N.Z. Maori	Hawai'i	Marquesas
house	fale	fale	fare	whare	hale	hae
island	motu	motu	motu	motu	moku	motu
chief	e'iki	ali'i	ari'i	ariki	ali'i	haka'iki
priest	tufunga	tufunga	tahua	tohunga	kahuna	tau'a
man	tangata	tangata	taata	tangata	kanaka	enata
woman	fefine	fafine	vahine	wahine	wahine	vehine
land	fonua	fanua	fenua	whenua	honua	henua

Fig. 15 *Words illustrating the relationship between the languages of Polynesia.*



The Original Inhabitants

TABLE 2

The West Polynesian—East Polynesian Cultural Division

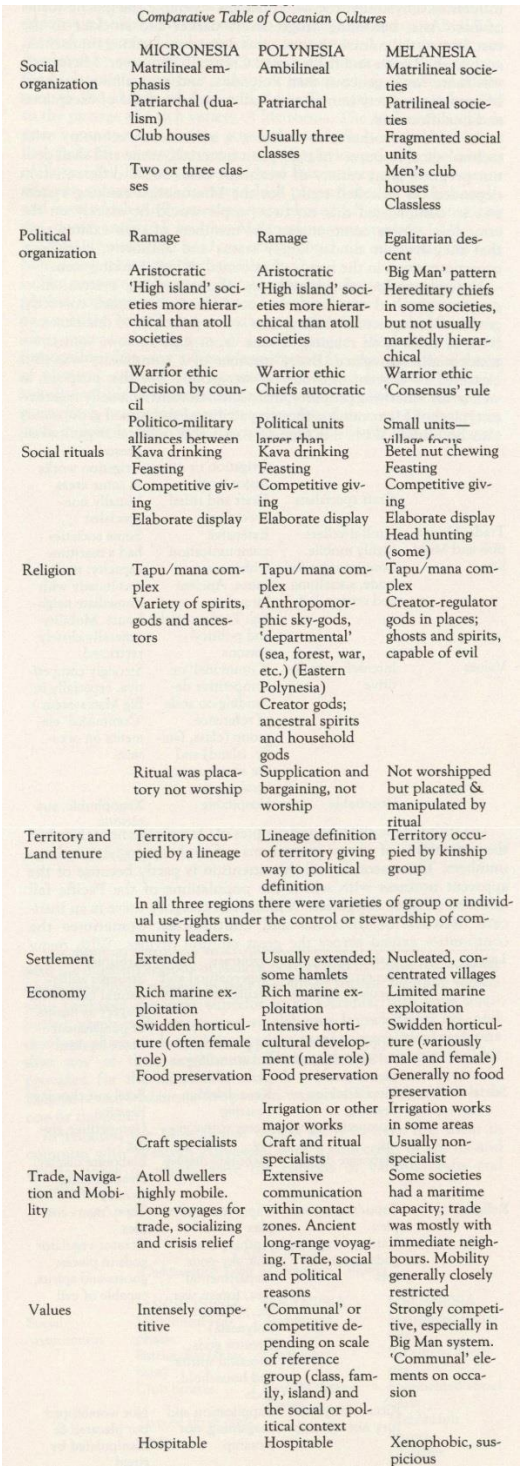
(Adapted from E.G. Burrows, 'Western Polynesia: a Study in Cultural. Differentiation' in *Etnologiska Studier* (1938) 7:1-192.)

	WEST	EAST
ECONOMY:		
Fishing	Bonito hook points with two fastening holes	Simpler form of bonito point
	Reef and net fishing common	Net fishing rare; greater use of bait hooks
Gardening	Sweet potato minor	Extensive use of sweet potato
Food Preparation	Food pounders rare	Stone food pounders widely used
Land Tenure	Strongly hereditary through either mother or father	Chiefs' perogative overrode the hereditary principle
MATERIAL CULTURE		
Tapa	Brief soaking of bark	Long soaking of bark
	Pasting technique	Felting technique
Basketry	Coiled type	Not coiled
Houses	Rounded ends with parallel rafters	Rounded ends with radial rafters in Society Islands
		Rectangular houses in most places
Canoes	Hulls have low ends	Hulls have upraised ends
	Little decoration or none	Carved decoration
	Flange-lashing of planks	Planks lashed straight through, with cover strip
	Indirect outrigger connection	Direct outrigger connection
	Lateen sail	Sprit sail
	Direction changed by shunting	Direction changed by tacking
Adzes	Untanged	Tanged for hafting
	Quadrangular cross-section not dominant	Quadrangular cross-section most common. Triangular cross-section dominant in Society Islands
Art	No human figures	Carved human figures
Music	Slit gong	Drum

TABLE 2 (continued)

	WEST	EAST
SOCIAL PRACTICES		
Kava	Elaborate ceremony	Not ceremonial
Kinship	More complicated terminology concerning gender relationships.	Simpler gender and kinship terminology
	Brother-sister avoidance	No brother-sister avoidance
	Vasu (*fahu*) privileges (for a man's sister's son)	No *vasu*
Rank	Honorific language to address chiefs	No chiefly language
	Infinite subtle gradations	Sharp status divisions
Religion	Tangaloa (Tangaroa) known but not a major god	Four great 'departmental' gods, Tangaroa, Rongo, Tu, & Tane, and many lesser gods and heroes
	Family and animal spirits important	Family patron spirits were known
	'Evolutionary' creation myth	'Procreative' creation myth
	'Pulotu' spirit home, located in the west	'Hawaiki' spirit home located in the east
	God houses	Open sacred court
	Malae: a common meeting place	Malae (marae) a sacred, ritual place, except in New Zealand
Death	Bodies interred	Tree or cave burial. Relics often kept by family

Fig. 16 *Comparative Table of Orginal Inhabitants*



Comparative Table of Oceanian Cultures

	MICRONESIA	POLYNESIA	MELANESIA
Social organization	Matrilineal emphasis	Ambilineal	Matrilineal societies
	Patriarchal (dualism)	Patriarchal	Patrilineal societies
	Club houses	Usually three classes	Fragmented social units
	Two or three classes		Men's club houses
			Classless
Political organization	Ramage	Ramage	Egalitarian descent
	Aristocratic	Aristocratic	'Big Man' pattern
	'High island' societies more hierarchical than atoll societies	'High island' societies more hierarchical than atoll societies	Hereditary chiefs in some societies, but not usually markedly hierarchical
	Warrior ethic	Warrior ethic	Warrior ethic
	Decision by council	Chiefs autocratic	'Consensus' rule
	Politico-military alliances between	Political units larger than	Small units—village focus
Social rituals	Kava drinking	Kava drinking	Betel nut chewing
	Feasting	Feasting	Feasting
	Competitive giving	Competitive giving	Competitive giving
	Elaborate display	Elaborate display	Elaborate display
			Head hunting (some)
Religion	Tapu/mana complex	Tapu/mana complex	Tapu/mana complex
	Variety of spirits, gods and ancestors	Anthropomorphic sky-gods, 'departmental' (sea, forest, war, etc.) (Eastern Polynesia)	Creator-regulator gods in places; ghosts and spirits, capable of evil
		Creator gods; ancestral spirits and household gods	
	Ritual was placatory not worship	Supplication and bargaining, not worship	Not worshipped but placated & manipulated by ritual
Territory and Land tenure	Territory occupied by a lineage	Lineage definition of territory giving way to political definition	Territory occupied by kinship group
	In all three regions there were varieties of group or individual use-rights under the control or stewardship of community leaders.		
Settlement	Extended	Usually extended; some hamlets	Nucleated, concentrated villages
Economy	Rich marine exploitation	Rich marine exploitation	Limited marine exploitation
	Swidden horticulture (often female role)	Intensive horticultural development (male role)	Swidden horticulture (variously male and female)
	Food preservation	Food preservation	Generally no food preservation
		Irrigation or other major works	Irrigation works in some areas
	Craft specialists	Craft and ritual specialists	Usually non-specialist
Trade, Navigation and Mobility	Atoll dwellers highly mobile. Long voyages for trade, socializing and crisis relief	Extensive communication within contact zones. Ancient long-range voyaging. Trade, social and political reasons	Some societies had a maritime capacity; trade was mostly with immediate neighbours. Mobility generally closely restricted
Values	Intensely competitive	'Communal' or competitive depending on scale of reference group (class, family, island) and the social or political context	Strongly competitive, especially in Big Man system. 'Communal' elements on occasion
	Hospitable	Hospitable	Xenophobic, suspicious

Fig. 17 *Comparative Table of Oceanic Cultures*

We can also see consistencies of interconnectivity based on the distribution of the Maui narrative and by juxtaposing sculptural representations of a god. The narrative of islands fished up by the demi-god Maui is one indication of this consistent interconnectivity of Polynesia. While each narrative is unique, catered, and modified to local peculiarities of place, it still has its continuities in motifs and it is shared though all of Polynesia.[61] Another consistency can be seen in the sculpture representation of a deity across Polynesia and Oceania. While each is uniquely carved according to the traditions of the host culture, the sculptures exhibit similar characterization of body proportions, leg posturing, and an elaboration of the head, or seat of mana (Fig. 18 and Fig. 19).

Fig. 18 *Maori sculpture of a deity.* ***Fig. 19*** *Hawaiian sculpture of a deity*

[61] Bacil F. Kirtley, *A Motif-Index of Traditional Polynesian Narratives,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1971), 62-63.

3.3 Not so small

Hau'ofa counters the restricted picture of Oceania to reinforce the idea that islanders have never viewed their world by the quantity of land surfaces they inhabit separated and bound by a vast sea. Instead, the people of the Pacific have been connected by a crisscrossing of boundaries in "an ocean that had been boundless for ages."[62] This process has been going on for thousands of years, and continues today.[63] Oceania's peoples saw and see their world as much larger, for their universe encompasses not only their land, but also the ocean, the underworld, the heavens, and the constellations evident through myths, legends and oral traditions. "Their world was anything but tiny."[64]

A look at cultural histories and contemporary processes of Oceania has show that "the world of Oceania is not small; instead it is huge and growing bigger every day" (Figs. 12, Fig. 20 and Fig. 21). Indeed, it continues to undergo a "world enlargement," stalled but not stymied by others who impose and define boundaries upon them. Within Polynesia, the perpetual circulation of people and resources across the ocean was how social networks were expanded and maintained "Theirs was a large world in which peoples and cultures moved and mingled, unhindered by boundaries of the kind erected much later by imperial powers. From one island to another they sailed to trade and to marry, thereby expanding social networks for greater flows of wealth."[65]

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[62] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of islands," in *We Are the Ocean,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 31, 30.
[63] I. C. Campbell, *A History of the Pacific Islands,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 33, 224-5.
[64] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of islands," in *We Are the Ocean,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 31.
[65] Ibid., 30, 33.

Hau'ofa's view of a 'sea of islands' offers the idea of ancestral interconnectedness via physical geographic space and foregrounds exchanges and movements which later lead to cultural complexities and hybrids, "Hau'ofa was absolutely right to insist that the peoples of Oceania did not form discrete and isolated populations…they had always been mutually engaged through exchange."[66] The multiple connections in culture, language, narrative, tradition, and cosmology, which, despite apparent island physical separateness, indicate a very sure and consistent interconnectivity. The following modern map of the Pacific alters the representation of delineated boundaries, and heightens the portrayal of Oceania's interconnectedness (Fig. 20). It does the by highlighting in-between areas of association which (at least visually) present an image of island connectedness rather than separation.

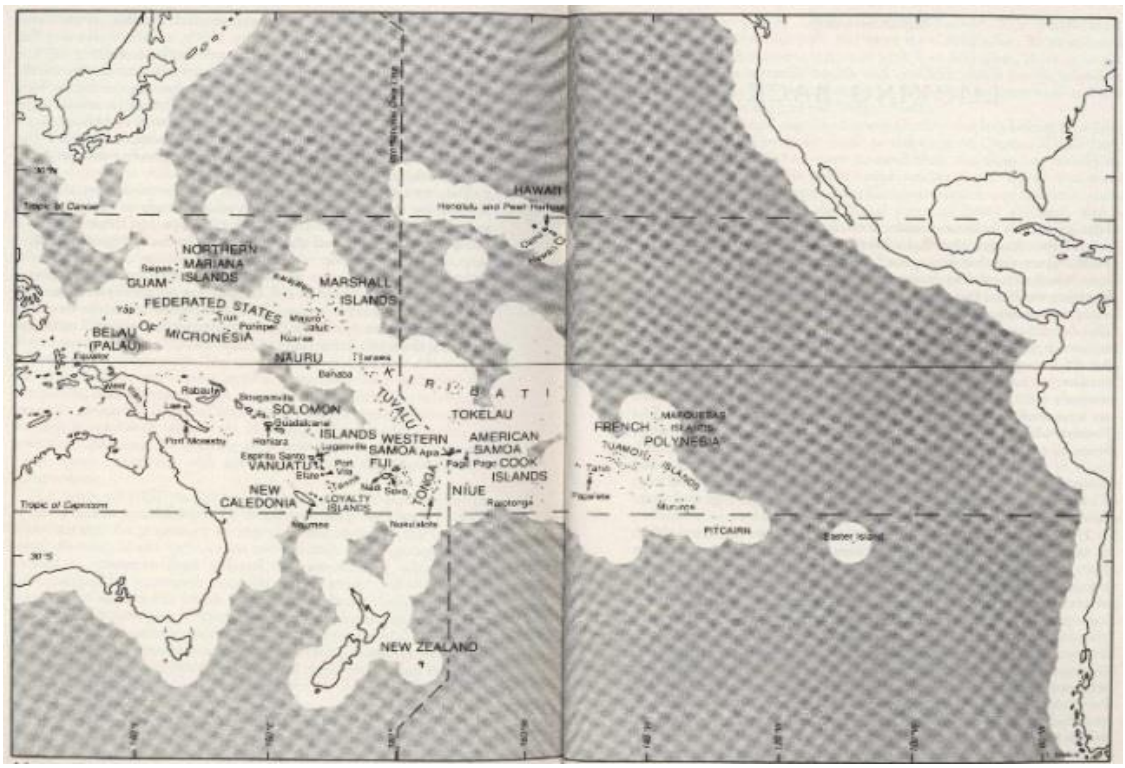

Fig. 20 *Map of the modern Pacific.*

[66] Peter Brunt et al. *Art in Oceania: A New History,* (New haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 23.

This process of world enlargement through expanding social networks continues today by contemporary oceanic pathways. The world of social networks is not so small; it extends across the reaches of the Pacific and beyond.[67] From an anthropological standpoint, Oceania continues as "a world of social networks that crisscross the ocean all the way from Australia and New Zealand in the southwest to the United States and Canada in the northeast (Fig. 21)."[68]

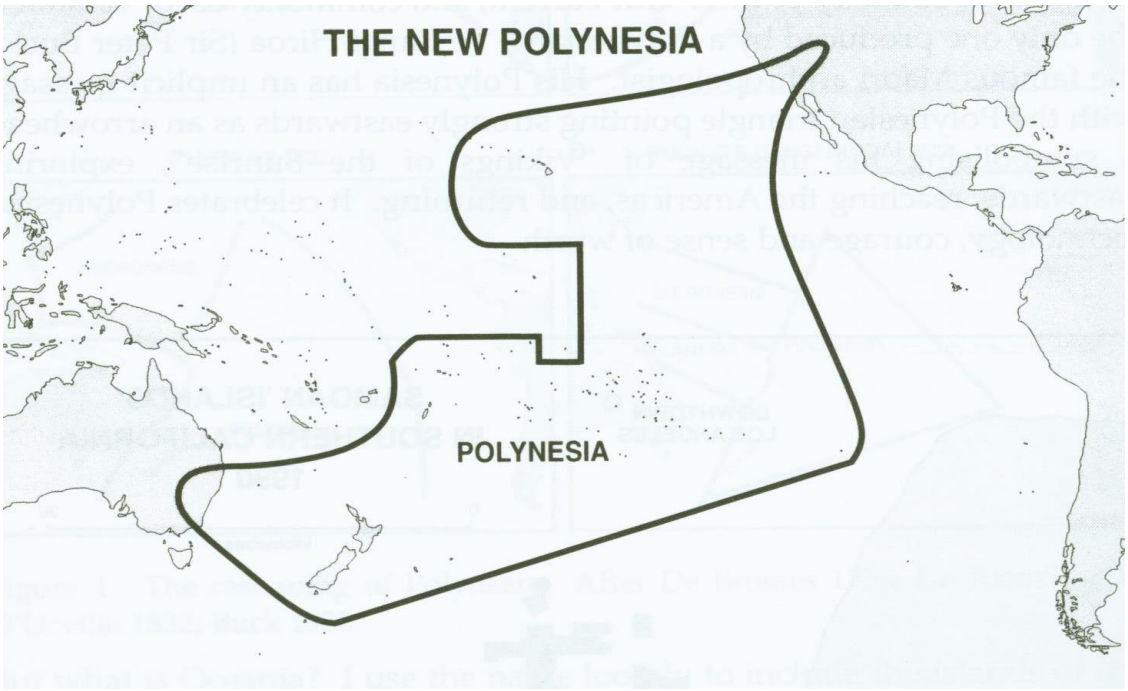

Fig. 21 *Extended map of Polynesia*

This world of social networking traverses the expanses of space and it enlivens the in-between. The ocean is representative of the in-between; a physical and

[67] Cathy A. Small, "Departures," in *Voyages: From Tongan Villages to American Suburbs,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).
Victoria S. Lockwood, "The Global Imperative and Pacific Island Societies," in *Globalization and Culture change in the Pacific Islands,* ed. Victoria S. Lockwood (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2004).
[68] Epeli Hau'ofa, "The Ocean in Us," in *We Are the Ocean,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 41.

metaphorical facilitator rather than an impediment of social networks for the Pacific and beyond. [69] The dynamics of mobility and change in the Pacific find familiar ground alongside the "changing cultural formations we are coming to associate with globalization."[70] But as society changes in relation to globalization, islanders "do not necessarily relinquish important values and perspectives embedded in their long-standing cultural beliefs and traditions. Instead they creatively fashion new identities that merge both the local and the global."[71] In the book *Globalization and Culture change in the Pacific Islands,* David Borofsky argues that this pattern of adaptation holds promise for viewing and responding to processes of globalization, he says,

> The pacific is 'a very clear laboratory for looking at processes now taking place in Europe and elsewhere. There are all sorts of complex couplings and un-couplings going on.' The different cultural elements we traditionally group together, based on our own history, overlap and diverge in a host of varied, fluid ways.[72]

The Oceanic Phenomenon, recognizes and revives an attention to the fluid and mobile forces at play in Oceania and the contemporary globalizing world. It receives force through the "sea of islands" concept and provides a perspective on mobility and

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[69] Paul R. Spickard et al., *Pacific Diaspora: island peoples in the United States and across the Pacific,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002).
[70] Robert Borofsky, "Need the Pacific Always Be So Pacific?" in *Globalization and Culture change in the Pacific Islands,* ed., Victoria Lockwood, (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2004), 41.
[71] Victoria S. Lockwood, "The Global Imperative and Pacific Island Societies," in *Globalization and Culture change in the Pacific Islands,* ed. Victoria S. Lockwood (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2004), 32.
[72] Robert Borofsky, "Need the Pacific Always Be So Pacific?" in *Globalization and Culture change in the Pacific Islands,* ed., Victoria Lockwood, (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2004), 41.

fluid identities. It also illustrates the formation of spatial structures and their collective manifestation across the span of cultural history and contemporary processes of Oceania.

3.4 Mobility and Fluid Identities

Patterns of stasis/movement and settled/nomadic present a fundamental opposing way of living on the planet. Most cultures have adapted to stasis and settled life, and our versions of regionalism emerge from them. The previous sketch of the house lot from Kahuku shows an example of architectural fluidity in a settled way. It shows the oceanic value of relations and the expansion and modification of space for such social networks. Here, a standardize architecture is altered to accommodate fluidities, its spatial arrangements also showcase in-betweens that evidence these relations (Fig. 22). Mobility has been down played in land-locked cultures as civilizations have developed. The Pacific condition of mobility is key to understanding and planning for these changes.

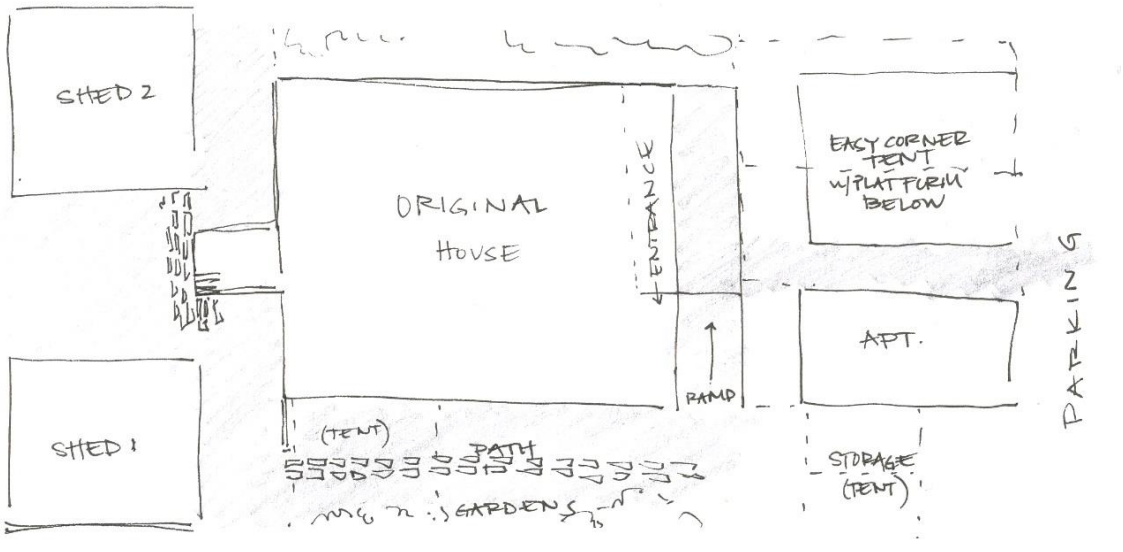

Fig. 22 *House lot showing occupation of space*

Mobility informs and participates with identity in an interconnected relationship in Oceanic cultures and offers a foundational perspective to decipher the situation of spatial structures.

Mobility is key in Oceanic cultures and its architectural manifestation is not coincidental. We know Oceania was formed by the movement and voyages of its people, and that continuous interactions and traditional circular patterns of mobility in the Pacific[73] have perpetuated a collective regional culture.[74] Architectural anthropologist Albert Refiti references the circular patterns of mobility by the Samoan term 'vanimonimo,' which is commonly defined as "sky"[75] or "galaxy"[76], but which Refiti referred to as movement around in circles, moving in eddies without extension.[77] This is an appropriate characterization of the spatial dynamics, interconnectedness and continuing patterns of movement in the Pacific, and the lot in Kahuku hints at a similar occurrence, both spatially and socio-culturally. For instance in Fig. 19 the architecture is adapted to facilitate continuing social-cultural relationships as the structures are interconnected in a circular island-like pattern.

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[73] Joel Bonnemaison, *The tree and the canoe: history and ethnography of Tanna*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 319.

[74] Patrick Vinton Kirch, *On the Road of the Winds: An Archaeological History of the pacific Islands before European Contact*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

Ward H. Goodenough, "Oceania and the problem of controls in the study of cultural and human evolution*", Journal of the Polynesian Society 66* (1957):154.

Epeli Hau'ofa, "The Ocean in Us," in *We are the Ocean*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 41.

[75] "Samoan Words," My Languages.org, accessed February 20, 2014, http://mylanguages.org/samoan_words.php.

[76] Moe Taula (Native Samoan speaker), in discussion with author, February 2014.

[77] Albert Refiti, "The circulation of mana in centralized spaces, striated territories and shimmering houses in Polynesia," (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania, Kona, Hawaii, February 5-8, 2014).

A tradition of interconnectedness in Oceania persists in modern times, even away from the islands. Due to the Pacific sense of mobility; "more than continental folk, islanders know that 'no man is an island' and that essential connections with a world outside always abridge self-sufficiency."[78] Lowenthal argues that, "Those away provide continuing support in remittances and gifts and display continuing interest in island affairs," and perpetuate patterns of mobility and networked culture through outlying pockets of Pacific Islanders-- "To islanders, the remote counts for at least as much as the recent."[79] This example of social-network and support references the continual and circular principles expressed by the term 'vanimonimo.' Because Oceania's communities have traditionally grown "accustomed to having many of their inhabitants away over lengthy periods," the islanders have become "used to accepting external links as part of local identities," and "the continual flux of movement back and forth makes island-based and migratory ways mutually supportive."[80] This often results in an increased ability of Pacific Islanders to "cope better than larger metropolitan or mainland states with modern patterns of enduring."[81] Amidst the flow and flux of contemporary movement, enduring principles of mobility facilitate the perpetual travel of family and values to and from island homes, and adds to a process of "togetherness (which) sustains insular identity, even when absentees do not replicate island culture in their new domiciles."[82]

This pattern of flow and flux that characterizes the movement and migrations in the Oceania is "not simply an 'outside' influence interfering with …culture…Rather, it

[78] David Lowenthal, "Mobility and Identity in the Island Pacific: A Critique," in *Pacific Viewpoint: Mobility and Identity in the Island Pacific*, ed. Phillip S. Morrison, Vol. 26, Number 1 (April 1985): 322.
[79] Ibid., 317, 323.
[80] Ibid., 322, 324.
[81] Ibid., 322.
[82] Ibid., 324.

(is) a part of the culture,"[83] it is a characteristic of identity. Hau'ofa reminds us that it is human nature to desire free movement, and the Pacific and its large expanse of open and traversable space is an optimal setting for people, for "it is in their blood to be mobile."[84] In contemporary times we find Pacific peoples "once again enlarging their world, establishing new resource bases and expanded networks for circulation."[85]

Mobility is a core principle of the Oceanic Phenomenon historically, and it contemporarily informs identity. Similar to mobility and the metaphor of the ocean, identity is also fluid and continuous (not fixed and constant). Amidst an Oceanic and globalizing contemporary reality identity continues to be situated within a context of flux, or "continual alteration," as "we all continually refashion our past to fit our shifting self-image in the present."[86] However, while identity can be altered, it cannot be discarded.

What seems to be a key concern has been the marginalization and assumed insignificance of the Oceanic area and subsequent perspectives on identity. The problem lies not in the perceived similarities and differences between islanders and mainlanders, but instead, the issue contrasts an imposed identity versus self-perceived identity, and the relationship between identity and location. Flux, as a component of mobility and a consistent part of life in Oceania, must also assume a role in the formation of identity, structures of mobility, and space. "Regional particularism elsewhere show that cultural identity can thrive even without a firm territorial base," showing that change and

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[83] Cathy A. Small, "Departures," in *Voyages: From Tongan Villages to American Suburbs,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 5.
[84] Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of islands," in *We Are the Ocean,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 35.
[85] Ibid.
[86] David Lowenthal, "Mobility and Identity in the Island Pacific: A Critique," in *Pacific Viewpoint: Mobility and Identity in the Island Pacific,* ed. Phillip S. Morrison, Vol. 26, Number 1 (April 1985): 317.

permanence are both constituents of identity. As mobility negotiates and reinforces an Oceanic idenity, it plays a dual role and expands the conceptions of the regional beyond an imposed and "firm territorial base."[87]

Similarly, when people transfer locations and encounter other cultures and identities, hybrids ensue, and cultural complexities emerge as the new norm becomes the new reality. The recycled effect of this continuous flow and motion leads to perpetual multiplicity. This is not a new phenomenon, nor has it been restricted to specific peoples or places in the world. But the rate at which it occurs today is in direct relation to globalization.

Of particular interest is that a similar process has been taking place in Oceania for generations, long before we began to recognize the globalization process. Today's Pacific diaspora in the global setting is simply a continuation of this Pacific pattern. However, despite the seemingly obvious, attention to such realities as the Oceanic Phenomenon have not been addressed much in relation to architecture. Yet it is understandable because such an issue is an intangible and difficult topic to tackle and classify when we are conditioned to think through the land-locked narrative.

The land-locked view of regionalism as contained and bounded represents the dominant and prevalent view within architectural culture and environments, and is easier to recognize because it incorporates specific physical/tangible characterization of place. In contrast, the more subtle spatial concepts and structures of mobility, movements and social networks of people (kin) require a different way of seeing and perceiving.

[87] Ibid., 316, 317.

The Oceanic Phenomenon provides a correction to our view since similar processes have long been occurring there that help us think about the globalized and dynamic world of cultural space in flux, and potentially even how we design and create architecture in this setting. Similarly, it recognizes how peoples in Oceania created architecture and how they continue to create architecture amidst steady movement and multiplicity (flow and flux).

3.5 Oceanic Practices and Productions

The Oceanic Phenomenon seeks to appropriate an alternate view of regionalism informed by patterns of an oceanic fluid reality. The following section exhibits examples of the intangible and tangible (cultural and spatial) structures that support the Oceanic Phenomenon and the conception of networked space this cultural ecological reality informs. This will be demonstrated through examples of text and poetry, architectural and spatial practices and maps of the ocean.

3.5.1 Text/Poetry

3.5.1.1 The Ocean, a metaphor

The ocean as a metaphor provides insight for understanding the Oceanic Phenomenon. The ocean itself is a force of continuous motion sustained by physical laws and governed by celestial bodies. It remains intact and abiding in spite of its fluid nature.

While it perpetually departs points of land, it assuredly returns. It represents a 'fluid constancy.'

The notion of fluid constancy carries with it a defining characteristic and identity of place and space; which is also fluid. Epeli Hau'ofa's "enduring legacy will be the ocean as a transforming metaphor…Epeli hoped a single metaphor... could give birth to a regional identity that changed the way we imagined ourselves."[88] And (I add) the way we see the enlarged context of our interaction and the relevancy of that context and interaction.

Karlo Mila, a poet of Polynesian origins, gives homage to Epeli Hau'ofa and his views about the ocean. Written after a tsunami, her poem reminds us of the powerful and sometimes devastating influence of the ocean which "has always shaped and continues to shape our cultures,"[89] and the subsequent patterns and adaptations which emerge as life forces and unites people through the realities and inferences of an oceanic metaphor.

We are reminded
In the most brutal way
That we are all connected.

We are reminded in the most brutal way,
That our relationship
With the ocean
Is never
On our
Own terms

[88] Karlo Mila-Schaaf, " 'Epeli Hau'ofa: The Magical Metaphor Man" (paper presented at the Otago University Division of Humanities Pacific Research Cluster symposium "An Oceanic Imagination: A Tribute to the Life and Mind of Epeli Hau'ofa, Dunedin, New Zealand, October 21, 2009). 4. (accessed Feb 15, 2014, http://www.otago.ac.nz/humanities/otago060724.pdf)
[89] Ibid., 2.

We are reminded
In the most brutal way
Why dominion over nature
Was never a part
Of our epistemology

We are reminded
In the most brutal way
Why we know ourselves to be
Simply a part
Of a sacred continuum
Of sacred relationships
Where even
The ocean is alive,
Where even
The night birds feel,
Where even
The rocks have spirit,
Where even
The blood red waves
Know why they are red.

We are reminded
In the most brutal way
The balance of life between
Is sacred, va tapuia,
Endlessly interconnected
Across distance, space, time, species, life, death.

We are reminded
In the most brutal way
Why long before
Christ arrived
On these shores
We have always been
A people of spirit
A people of faith.[90]

[90] Ibid., 2-3.

The ocean and its reality remind us in both brutal and simplistic ways, that just as the ocean, people are part of a continuum, endlessly connected and forward moving. The ocean is constant and altering, and patterns of life and living are informed by the ecology of place.

3.5.2 Architectural and Spatial Practices

3.5.2.1 Boats and Buildings

The ocean and construction of technology to cross it, present the opportunity for an oceanic metaphor to assert a presence and relevance in human patterns of movement and dwelling. While oceanic peoples are dispersed across the islands of the sea, "their ability to travel long distances allow them to link distant island communities and establish far-reaching exchange and social networks."[91] Boats have played an essential part in linking the geographical and socio-cultural spaces of the Pacific.

Boats have been the primary technology to operate and facilitate the expansion and interconnectedness of Oceania. This technology evolved in response to both the physical setting and societal values. Oceanic spatial perspectives and technologies align with what American architect and theorist Buckminster Fuller called "fluid geography."[92] As varied terrains were settled these technologies were translated into other forms. The following is an exploration of the potential translations of boats to buildings, their tectonic transformations and spatial perspectives.

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[91] Tevita O. Ka'ili, "Tauhi va: Nurturing Tongan Sociospatial Ties in Maui and Beyond," *The Contemporary Pacific,* Volume 17, Number 1 (2005): 86.
[92] R. Buckminster Fuller, *Fluid Geography,* (McCormick-Armstrong Company, 1944).

Translation of boats to buildings

Ships and boats represent extensions beyond the continental, beyond the land. They potentially are, from a land-locked viewpoint, the first evidence of an expanding and enlarging worldview and conception; they have "transformed man's relationship to the world."[93] Architect Le Corbusier's once said "a house is a machine to live in."[94] His view is that the role of a house is first a functional and mechanical one. To apply this to the aquatic world we could say a ship or boat is "a machine to go to sea in… and all else about her must be subordinated to this function."[95]

A boat may be decorated, but its natural sculptural beauty is a direct response to its operation and efficiency.[96] Its point of contact with the sea is where different elements encounter each other and form a relationship to interact successfully. While an exploration of the art of boat building is important in processing the translation of built form in an ocean oriented world, more attention has been given to the art of navigation rather than boat design. This may be due to the hierarchical relationship of its function over its form. Boats perform a functional role to accomplish a social role. Built form does not solely engage with the environment to fulfill the desire of the environment. Built form engages with the natural environment to substantiate and enrich human processes of dwelling and organization. While boats successfully operate in the

[93] Douglas Phillips-Birt, *Ships and Boats: The Nature of their Design,* (London: Studio Vista Limited, 1966), 7.
[94] George H. Marcus, *Le Corbusier: Inside the Machine for Living,* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2000), 8.
[95] Douglas Phillips-Birt, *Ships and Boats: The Nature of their Design,* (London: Studio Vista Limited, 1966), 7.
[96] Ibid., 8-9.

environment through an achievement of buoyancy, stability and uprightness,[97] navigation is only successful when boat technologies are utilized in response to enduring and fluid realities. A sailor can only navigate and obtain the intended destination if he/she can obtain an enlarged perspective of the environment and reposition the vessels in relation to ocean realities of flow and flux, change and variability.

Boat typologies are variable, dependent upon the dynamics of their water environment. In Southeast Asia and Thailand, most watercrafts are "the product of the tranquil riverine condition and an expression of an organized society. Out in the ocean, the turbulent conditions demand a different design."[98] Nevertheless, in spite of the different environment of their origin, similarities in boat design across the Pacific Rim and Oceania illustrate interconnectivity of the region.[99] While boats and buildings most commonly are situated upon different "scapes", there is transference of materials, form and technics between them. Their utilization and social function also translates spatial principles of connectivity, network, and kin. The following is a visual sampling of traditional boats and buildings of a few islands in Oceania (Fig. 23 and Fig. 24).

[97] Ibid., 48-9.
[98] Sumet Jumsai, *Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam and the West Pacific*, (Bangkok: Chalermnit Press & DD Books, 1997), 52.
[99] Ibid., 53.

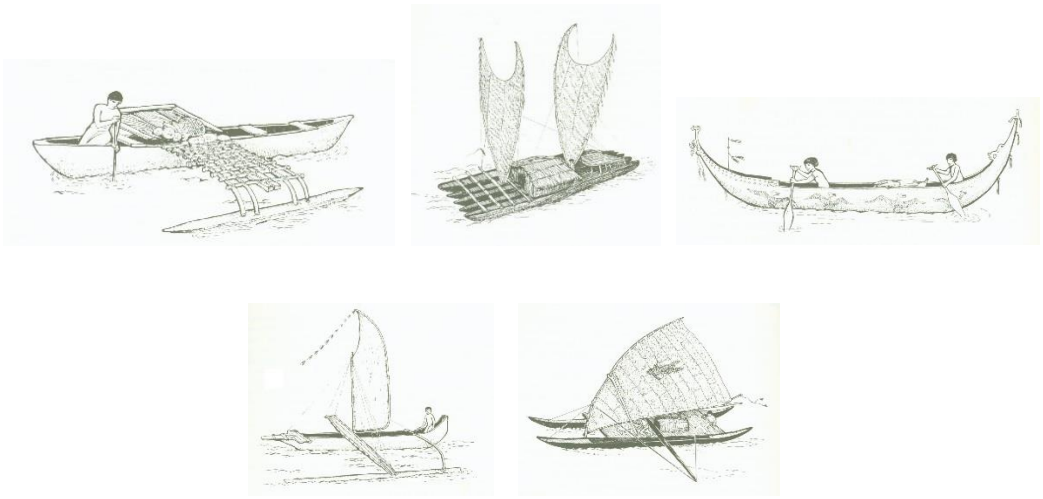


Fig. 23 *Island origins of canoes(clockwise from top left), Mokil, Gulf of Papua, San Cristobal, Tonga, Tahiti*

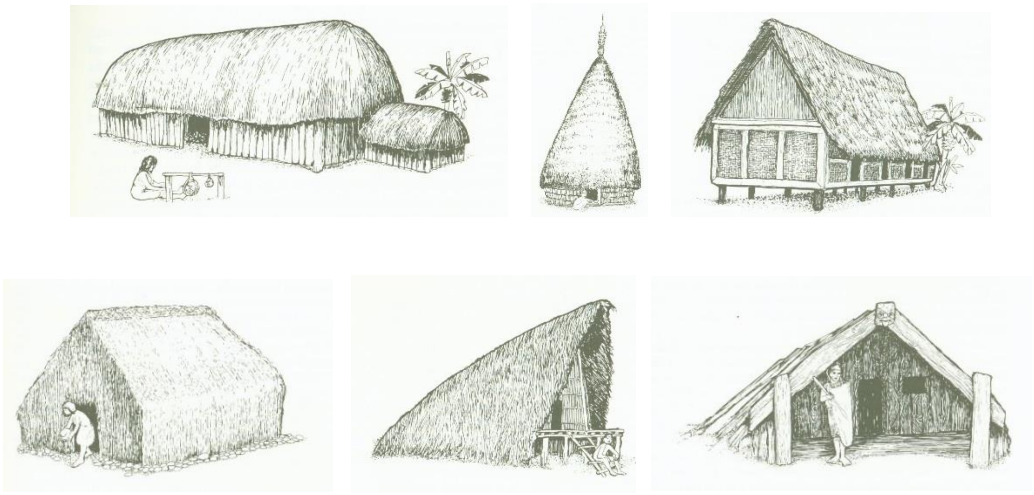


Fig. 24 *Island origins of buildings (clockwise from top left), Tahiti, Gulf of Papua, Palau, New Zealand, New Guinea, Hawaii*

Boats to buildings: tectonic transformations and spatial perspectives

The translation and transformation of boats to buildings is both characteristically a tectonic phenomenon and a spatial one. "There is no denying that marine technology was developed to a sufficient extent to allow the majority of the Pacific Islands to have been settled by 1200 years ago, and that, in the majority of cases, these colonization

events were planned and purposeful."[100] It is also requisite that we acknowledge the resulting translation of these technologies to their later articulation as structures on a variable scape; from seascape to landscape. While we must acknowledge the presence of variations, basic design elements of boats are consistent across the region. A look at some of these seaworthy structures displays a literal translation of tectonic elements and spatial perspectives of water informed realities and ideologies. This section exhibits the tectonic and spatial translation of canoe lashings, mast and sail, outrigger, and decoration/ornamentation to buildings, the structure and use of the canoe house, and the *Rapa Nui* house structure, the *Hare Vaka.*

[100] Paul Rainbird, *The Archaeology of Micronesia,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 57.

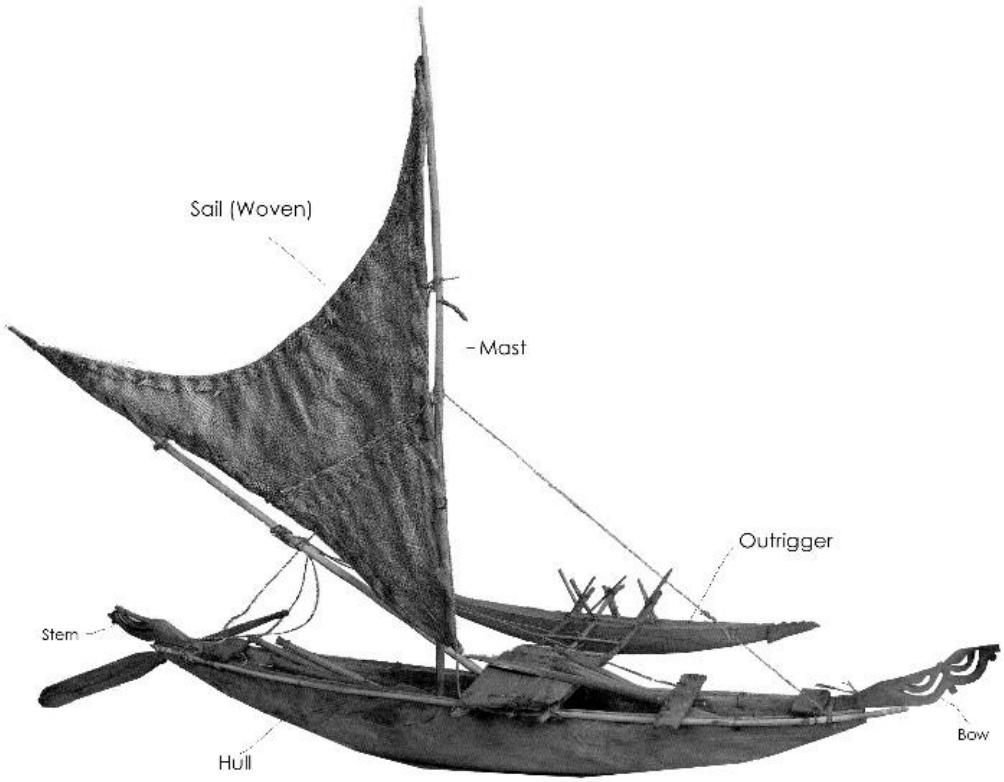


Fig. 25 *Labeled outrigger canoe*

Lashing

The basic structure the canoe is made from a single log with the "sides built up with planks… tied together with sennit twine and caulked."[101] The following images display examples canoe lashing and a similar practices of translation to buildings (Fig. 26-30).

[101] Ibid., 55-6.

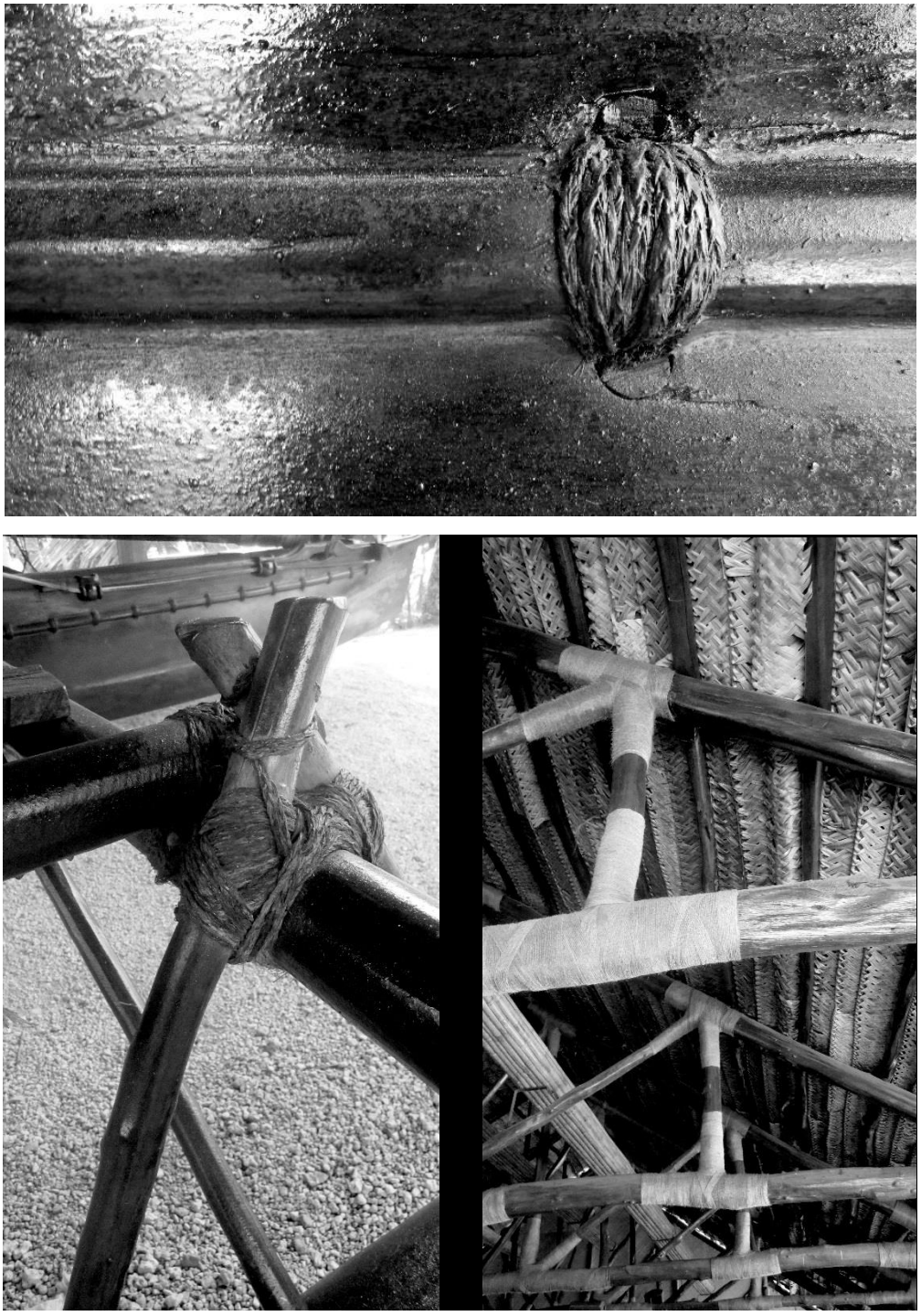


Fig. 26 *&* ***27*** *Lashing on the Fijian canoe the Camakau (pronounced 'Thamakau')* ***Fig. 28*** *Lashing on the Fare Heiva, a Tahitian building*

Fig. 29 *Lashing on the Fare Heiva, a Tahitian building*

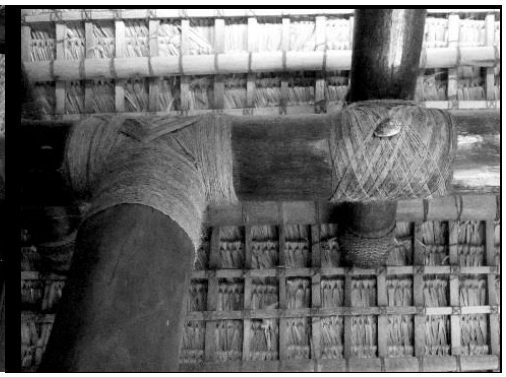
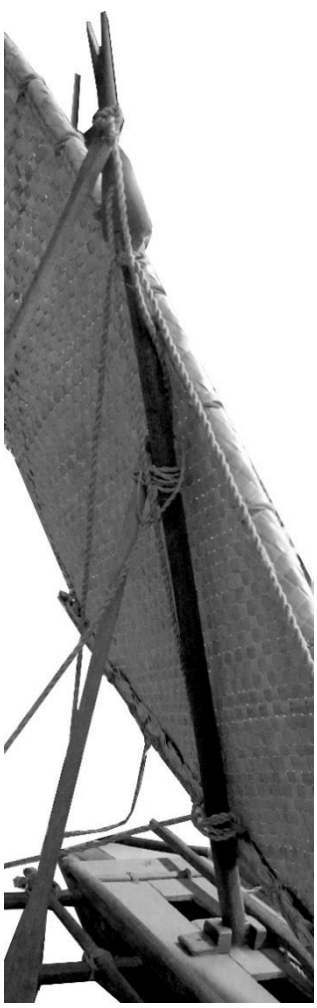
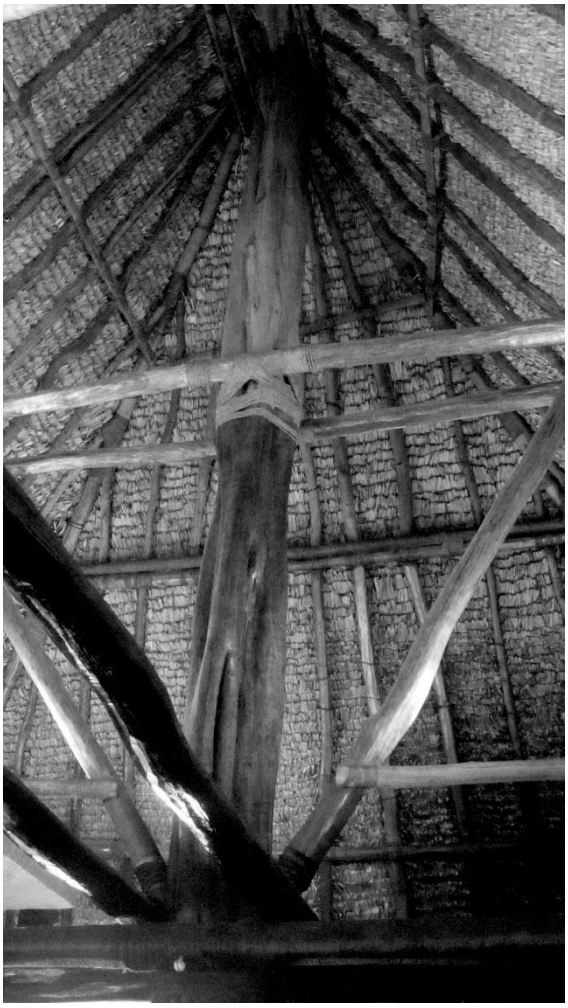


Fig. 30 *Lashing on the Fale Faka-tu'i, a Tongan building.*

Mast and Sail

Masts poles or posts connected to the base and body of the canoe, and are also connected to a woven sail. Their engagement with the sail indicated a relationship with the wind and facilitates movement and the traversing of ocean space for interpersonal interaction. Some canoe designs incorporate an interchangeable or moving post capable of being lowered (Fig. 31, *the base of the mast is a pivoting point*). This is the case with the Marshall Islands canoe, the *walap* and the Fijian canoe, the *Camakau* (Fig. 33 and Fig. 34). Relatedly, the engagement of posts with a thatched roof creates and facilitates space for interpersonal interaction within the building (Fig. 32).





(above) ***Fig. 31*** *Canoe model.* ***Fig. 32*** *Post and thatch in the Vale Levu, a Fijian building*

(below) ***Fig. 33*** *Marshallese outrigger canoe model.* ***Fig. 34*** *Fijian Camakau canoe model*

Sails were typically woven of plant materials; most common were pandanus leaves or "palm leaves sewn together and shaped like a lateen sail" (Fig. 31, Fig. 33, and Fig. 34). [102] The same weaving patterns are incorporated into buildings. The following images display woven palm leaves that operate as the inner layer of traditional Polynesian roof construction (Fig. 35, Fig. 36, and Fig. 37).

Fig. 35 *Woven palm leaves on the exterior of the Fare Heiva, a Tahitian building*

[102] Ibid., 55.
Andrew Strathern et al. *Oceania: An Introduction to the Cultures and Identities of Pacific Islanders,* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), 111.

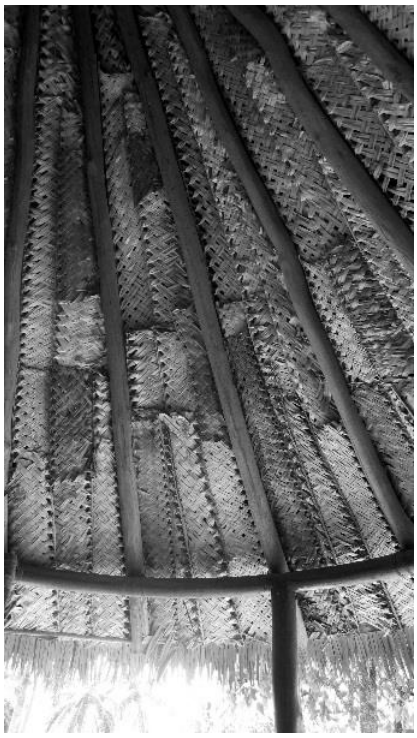



Fig. 36 *Woven palm leaves in the Fare Heiva, a Tahitian building* ***Fig. 37*** *Woven palm leaves inside the Fale Tou Lalanga mo e Lafo, a Tonga building*

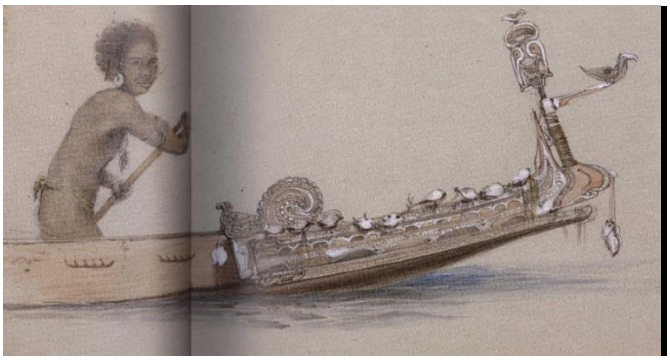
Outrigger

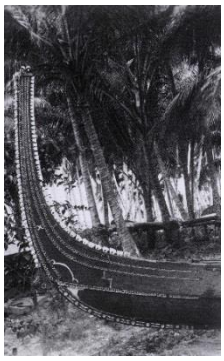
Most sailing canoes were "equipped with a single outrigger" kept on the windward side by interaction with the shifting sail.[103] The long side of houses (rather than the gable) with its sloped thatch roof most often faced the prevailing winds as a structural stabilizer, similar to the role of the canoes outrigger.

[103] Paul Rainbird, *The Archaeology of Micronesia,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 55.

Decoration/ Ornamentation

While many canoes in Oceania were not decorated, some possessed painted hulls "with natural pigments available to the islands and often in red, black or white, with mangrove sap, coconut oil and lime, mentioned as possible binders for the pigment, which also aided in preserving the twine and wood."[104] Canoes, as facilitators of mobility and interaction may also have been decorated to include various other materials and cultural motifs for a "dazzle and awe"[105] effect in exchanges, as such is the case in the creation of decorated figurehead on the canoes in the Louisiade archipelago and Solomon Islands (Fig. 38 and Fig. 39). The practice of decoration at the forefront of boats is also translated into buildings (Fig 40).





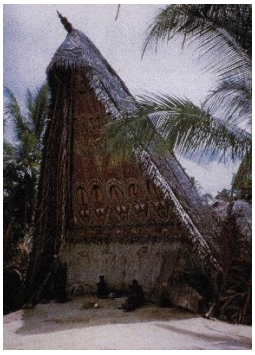


Fig. 38 *Figurehead of a canoe, Louisiade archipelago* ***Fig. 39****. War canoe, Solomon Islands, 1903.*
Fig. 40 *Decorated men's house, New Guinea.*

We can also see a visible translation of traditions of decoration from boats to buildings in contemporary Papua New Guinea. In Papua New Guinea, the Gogodala group decorated ceremonial racing canoes with ancestral designs (Fig. 41).[106] Similar

[104] Ibid., 56.
[105] Peter Brunt et al. *Art in Oceania: A New History*, (New haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 100.
[106] Ibid., 140.

traditions of decoration and artistic representation can be seen as translated onto the façade of the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation building in Port Moresby (Fig. 42).[107]

Fig. 41 *Ceremonial racing canoe, Papua New Guinea, 1970's*

Fig. 42 *Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation building, Port Moresby, 1975*

[107] Ibid., 371.

Canoe houses

In exploring the transitional relationship from boats to buildings or from canoes to houses, it is necessary to note that most historical oceanic settlements had buildings specifically made for boats, this building was called the canoe house. These structures, which housed the primary means/vessel for exchanges and connections, also operated as structures for interpersonal and inter-settlement exchange and connection. In Pohnpei for instance, the war canoe houses were the largest structure measuring roughly 100' x 40' and also functioned as "council rooms…halls for feasting and other ceremonies." [108] Similarly, the Hawaiian canoe house, the *Halau Wa'a,* translates to mean 'school of the canoe.' It was a building which not only stored the canoe but was also a place where important information was passed on through generations. [109] Other traditional and contemporary canoe houses of Oceania, specifically the Solomon Islands and New Zealand, can be seen in Fig. 43 and Fig. 44.

[108] William N. Morgan, *Prehistoric Architecture in Micronesia*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), 79.
[109] "Hawaiian Dictionary," *Hawaiian Words,* accessed April 21, 2014, http://hawaiian-words.com/home/hawaiian-dictionary/.

Fig. 43 *Canoe House, Solomon Islands, 1886-88.*

Fig. 44 *Contemporary Maori war canoe house*

Rapa Nui: Hare Vaka

There is a house structure in Rapa Nui called the *Hare Vaka* (Fig. 45 and Fig. 46). Its form and name allude to a literal translation of boat to building technics because "it looks like an overturned canoe."[110] Its name translates accordingly; *Hare* meaning 'house' and vaka meaning 'boat' or 'canoe.' Its aerodynamic structure is believed to have been an architectural strategy to address the islands low profile and high winds. "Traditionally these structures extended 30-60 feet long" with some extending up to 328 feet long. [111]

Fig. 45 *Replica structure of the Hare Vaka of Rapa Nui at the Polynesian Cultural Center (a)*

[110] Rapa Nui Exhibit, "Hare Vaka" placard, Laʻie, Hawaii, Polynesian Cultural Center, April 2014.
[111] Ibid.

Fig. 46 *Replica structure of the Hare Vaka of Rapa Nui at the Polynesian Cultural Center (b)*

In the contemporary, modern, and globalized world, many of these traditional building practices and technologies are obsolete, we seldom see them in developed countries and even in less developed countries they may be rare. Rarely do we see evidences of structural technics of previous oceanic tradition or buildings like the canoe house, unless it is reproduced as kitsch. The one technique that readily continues is decoration/ornamentation, as shown in the aforementioned translation of boat to building in Papua New Guinea.

The translation of boats to buildings has faded, yet patterns of mobility, connectivity, and enlarging which boats facilitated continues through varying technologies; including the internet, social networking, and most recognizably through airplane technologies. Unlike the translation of boats to buildings, contemporary oceanic homes and buildings make no material, form, or architectonic translation of airplanes. Instead, this modern technology facilitates similar and enduring patterns of mobility at a larger scale and rate-- leading to settlement patterns and the perpetuation and re-

articulation of enduring spatial arrangements. Even operating in and with land-locked systems and structures of architecture, these enduring (and perhaps unrecognized) patterns of spatial unboundedness and enlargement emerge. The modified houses and lots in Kahuku illustrate these patterns and social sensibilities as they enlarge and modify the standard, fixed structure.

Comparison of Boats and Buildings in South-East Asia

Bordering Western Oceania, we find along the Pacific Rim of Asia other water-oriented cultures. In Southeast Asia, an aquatic orientation is manifest on structures of land and sea. The architecture displays two characteristic types, land-based stone structures and water-based or "amphibious" raised wooden structures. While there are exceptions, the land-based structures typically are associated with the classical and formal, whereas the water-based relate to the practical and ordinary. Figs. 47-52 shows a categorization of these types and correlating images. Given the location and conditions of Southeast Asia, it would make sense to accept a water-oriented societal reality and view.[112] A view that would translate from natural conditions to built conditions, "Just as water craft were the first of all vehicles, so was the house on stilts probably the first of all man-made buildings. Stone buildings, on the other hand must have followed later with the shift of the population on to the great land mass."[113] Specifically in Thailand and the Philippines, the actual land-based vehicles, "the ceremonial floats, carts, and ten-wheel

[112] Sumet Jumsai, *Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam and the West Pacific*, (Bangkok: Chalermnit Press & DD Books, 1997), 78.
[113] Ibid., 79.

trucks...elaborately decorated with *naga* (water symbols) and other motifs, are really boats and rafts transferred on to land and fitted with wheels."[114]

Types of Land-based and Water-based Architecture

Building Type	*Land-based Architecture (Masonry Structure)*	*Water-based Architecture (Wooden Structure on Stilts)*
Monastery (*wat*)	Pagoda (*chedi*)	Occasional wooden structures on stilts
	Ordination Hall (*bot*)	
	Congregation Hall (*vihan* or *vihara*)	Monk's cell
	Monk's cell (*kutti*)	Meeting Hall (*sala-kanprien*)
Palace	Throne Hall (*Phrathinang*)	Library (*haw trai*)
	Royal Pavilion	Throne Hall
Domestic		Royal Pavilion
		Pyre (*meru*)
		House

Fig. 47 *Table of Types of Land-based and Water-based Architecture*

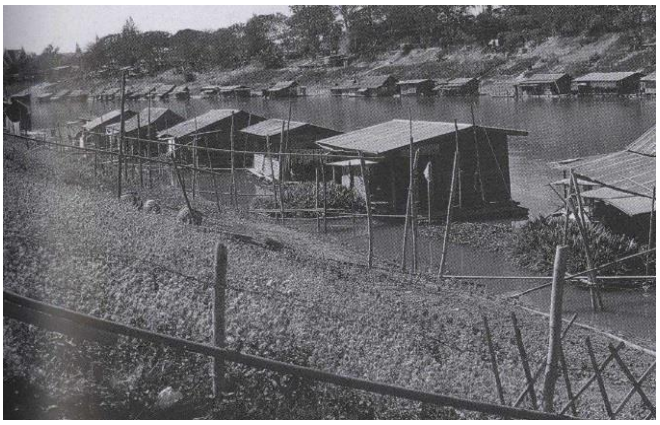
Fig. 48 *Houses on stilts and megaliths shaped like boats*

Fig. 49 *Filipino truck with naga motifs*

In the book *Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam and the West Pacific* we can see the metamorphosis of completely aquatic to amphibious habitats and the analogy between the raft and house on stilts. The long house and meeting house "frequently holds the entire

[114] Ibid., 16, 60.

community on its single raft-like platform"[115] and operate in a way like a sea of islands, facilitating interaction and movement between and around. More specifically, the longhouse in Siam caters to the "traditional extended family system"; and is expandable for the growing needs of the family or community. The physical area of the structure is redefined and re-appropriated as social realities are altered. The structure anticipates and is accommodating of this change, of this regional reality. The layout of these aquatic Southeast Asian constructions re-appropriates the role of the boat. They form networks within themselves upon boat like structure while the long house which separates units, diverges from the patterns of social organization grouped together on connected raft structures[116] (Fig. 50, Fig. 51 and Fig. 52).



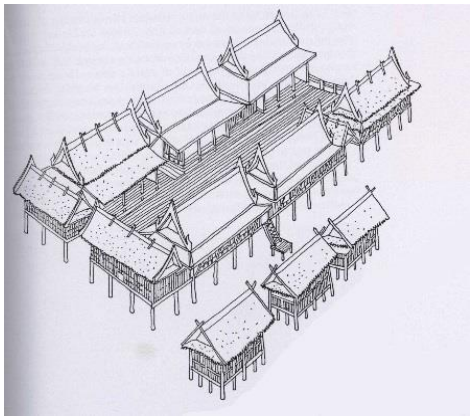


Fig. 50 *Floating houses, Siam* ***Fig. 51*** *Expanding raft house, Siam* ***Fig. 52*** *Longhouse, Indonesia*

[115] Ibid., 102-3.
[116] Ibid., 105.

3.5.2.2 Moving buildings

The Oceanic Phenomenon seeks to gather in and recognize enduring patterns of movement in the Pacific as the result of kin ties and exchange. Within this view, we become accustomed to the movement of peoples and the change and flows across landscapes and seascapes. While we easily see this change among people, how can we recognize it in architecture and the built environment?

In the book *Home in the Islands: Housing and Social Change in the Pacific,* Margaret Rodman identifies a site in Vanuatu in which the houses and buildings were 'moving.' Her exploration provides another illustration of the Oceanic Phenomenon in spatial terms. Speaking about her own home, after a few years of absence, she writes, "We were surprised and somewhat disoriented to find that *the house was not even where we had left it.* It had moved about ten meters; it faced no longer north, but east; and the layout had changed completely. To local people, our house was still our house, complete with the Canadian flag…To us; the house was at once hauntingly familiar, yet strange"[117] (Fig. 53 and Fig. 54).

[117] Margaret Rodman, "Prologue," in *Home in the Islands: Housing and Social Change in the Pacific,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 1-5.

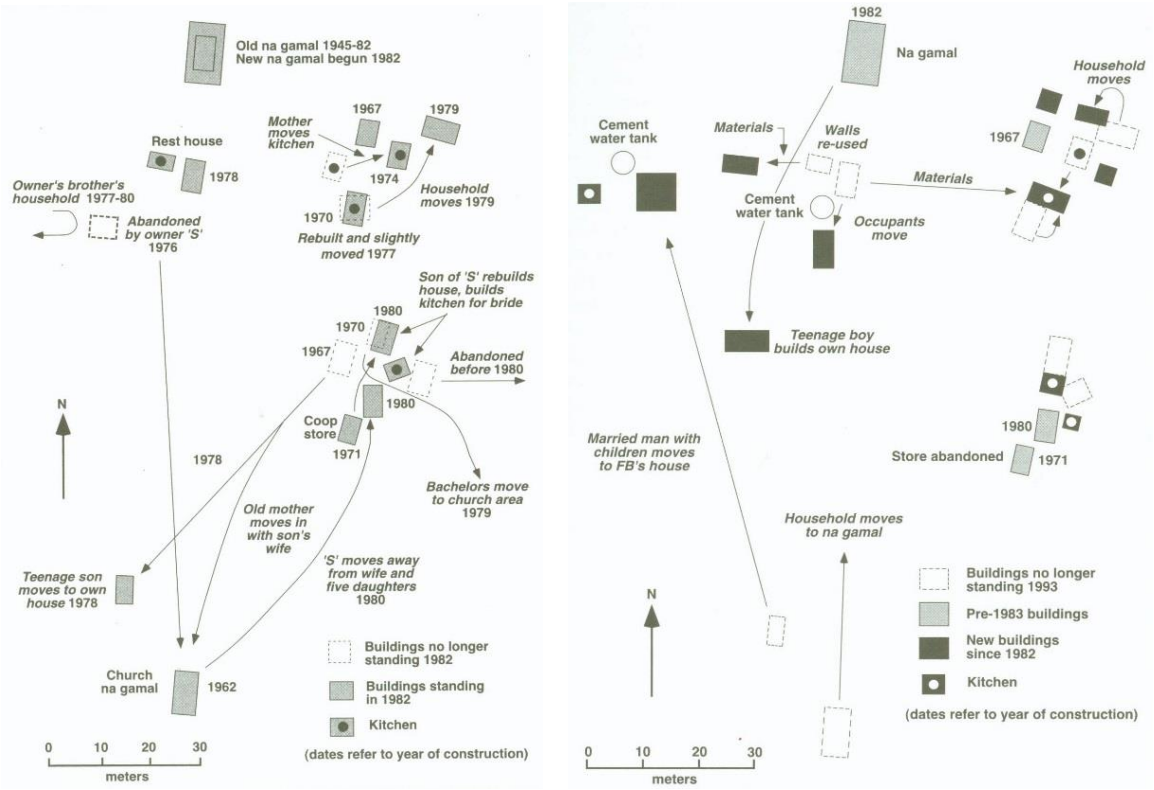


Fig. 53 *Moving housesLovantuweliweli hamlet, Vanuatu, site map from 1982 (left) and* ***Fig. 54*** *Moving housesLovantuweliweli hamlet, Vanuatu, site map from 1993(right)*

Her research gives evidence to the subtleties and fluidity of social change and architecture. While modifications to the site over time have been the result of disasters and changing needs, the re-articulation and movement of the structures and materials, including "whose walls ended up on whose house, which way the houses faced, and who lived in them,"[118] provide an example and confirm the fluidity and porous nature of social relationships and boundaries; an evidence of the Oceanic Phenomenon upon land.

[118] Ibid., 4.

3.5.2.3 Nan Madol: 'City on Water'

Upon the island of Pohnpei in Micronesia is the ancient settlement of Nan Madol. Nan Madol, meaning "spaces between structures"[119] is a collection of 92 rectangular, artificial islets made of coral rubble fill and stacked basalt connected by a network of waterways. The site, located on the southeast side of Temwen Island (Fig. 55 and Fig. 56) is believed to have been constructed in the 12th and 13th centuries under the reign of the Saudeleur dynasty, which conquered and unified Pohnpei.[120]

Nan Madol's site rests on the shores of Temwen island (about 4,600 feet) and extends out across the coral reef (about 2,450 feet) encompassing around 200 acres "occupied by the islets, their waterways, and the breakwaters."[121] What is distinctive about this settlement is that it is laid out on man-made, built up islands located in close proximity to each other and oriented to accommodate an ocean environment/seascape (Fig. 57-61). Unfortunately, there are only speculative theories about this site and location separate from the main island. However, one theory posits that its position may "symbolize and reinforce the unique character of the people who lived there and their ritual activities."[122] The architectural survey of this settlement indicates a people with affinities to the ocean and its variability. Both the location and layout of Nan Madol reinforce the concept of in-betweens, a site between land and sea and an architectural

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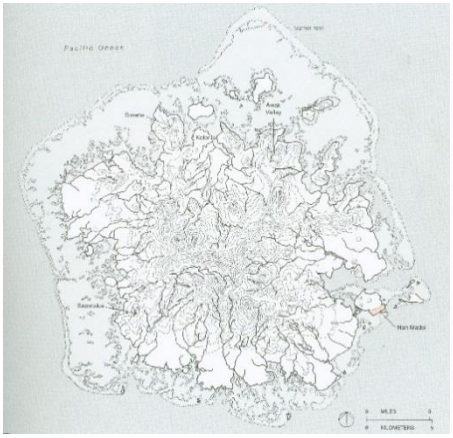
[119] Gene Ashby, *Pohnpei: An Island Argosy*, (Pohnpei: Rainy Day Press, 2003), 74.
*The original name for Nan Madol was Sou *Nan-leng* meaning 'reef of heaven.'
[120] William N. Morgan, *Prehistoric Architecture in Micronesia*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), 62, 85.
[121] Ibid., 62.
[122] Ibid.

layout connected by network of watery in-betweens. At varying scales, the site's situation and planning illustrate an Oceanic orientation and one approach to managing this convergence.

Nan Madol is a 'space between,' a hybrid space situated upon a coral reef in the midst of the fluidities and fluctuations of the sea. It is an example that illustrates one group of people's ingrained interaction with the sea. It is a microcosm of a "sea of islands" connected by its own watery in-betweens; the in-between space that connects is just as important as the structure itself (Fig. 62). And it is situated for access, not bounded by terrain; between the land and sea (Fig. 63 and Fig. 64). It also looks out or serves as a point of departure to other islands and their ancestral origins.



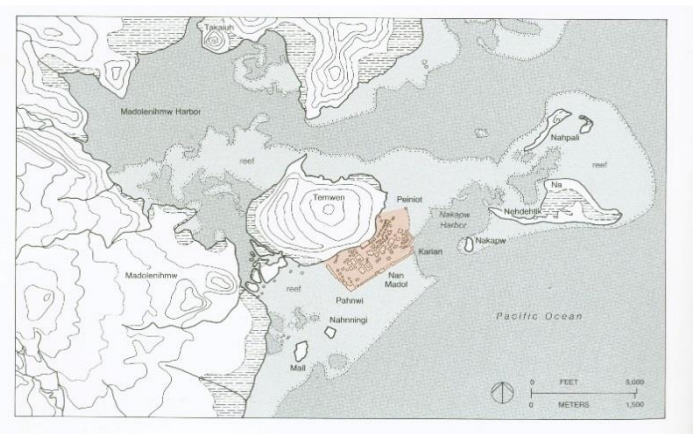


Fig. 55 *Map of Pohnpei.* ***Fig. 56*** *Map of Pohnpei, Nan Madol*

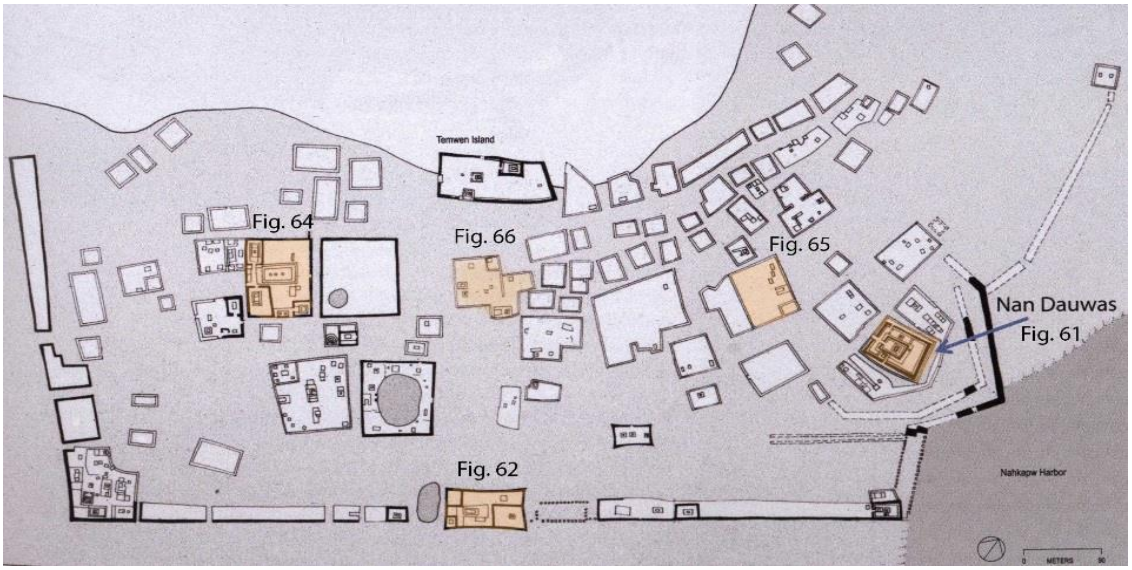
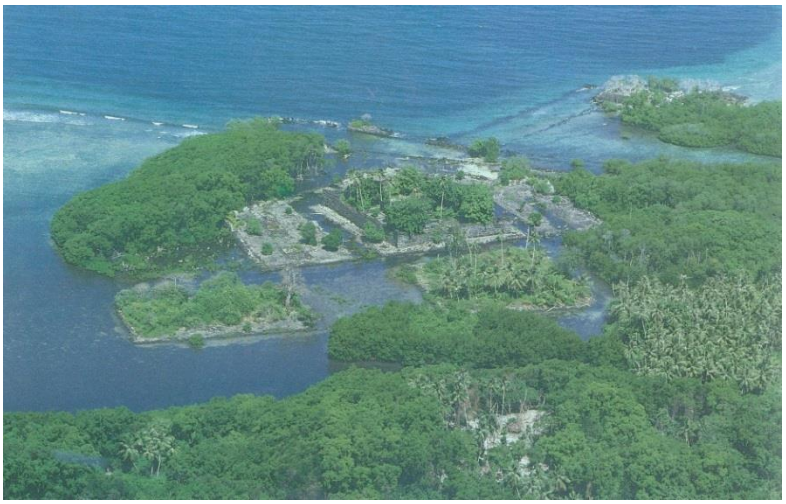


Fig. 57 *Map of Nan Madol, photo reference*



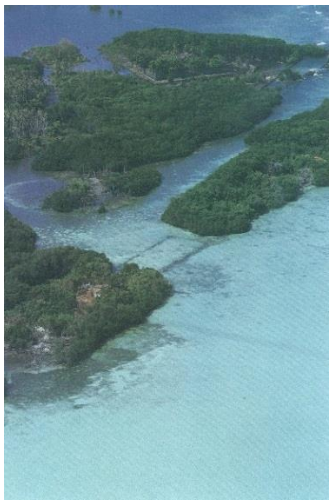


Fig. 58 *Aerial view of Nan Madol island Nandauwas (see Fig. 57 for reference)*

Fig. 59 *Aerial of Nan Madol island Lemenkou (see Fig. 57 for reference)*

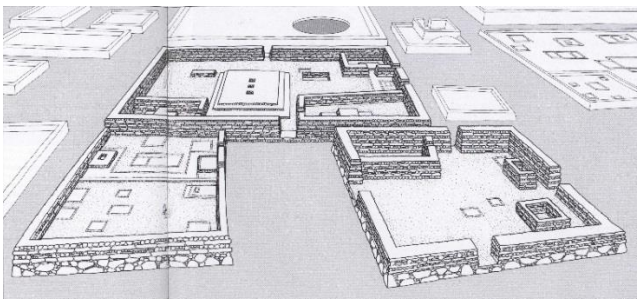


Fig. 60 *Detail of Nan Madol canal/island walls. Bast boulders packed with small basalt prisims*

Fig. 61 *Aerial view of Nan Madol royal compound Pahnkadira (see Fig. 57 for reference)*

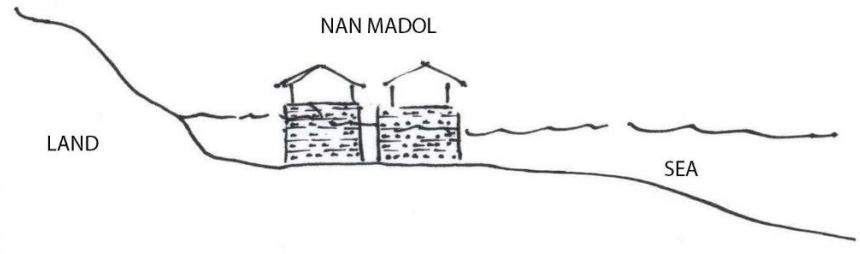


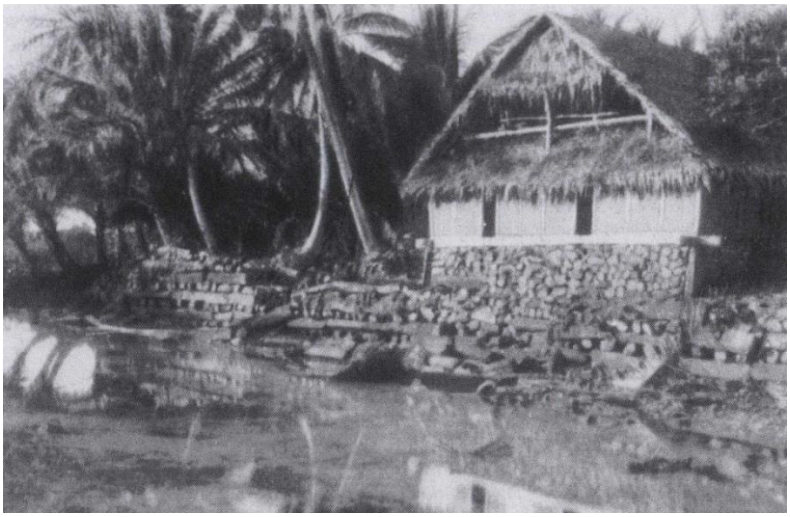
Fig. 62 *Diagram to illuminate Nan Madol as a microcosm of a "sea of islands".* ***Fig. 63*** *Diagram illustrating Nan Madol as an in-between* ***Fig. 64*** *Section illustrating Nan Madol as an in-between*

What is unique about this site's formation is its water focused architectural and spatial practice-- which is different than previous Pacific Rim and oceanic examples of water architecture. Nan Madol's stone architectural islands were built to accommodate

the daily changing tides, and the constant flow and flux of the ocean. The life world of this society was situated in a setting of flux, and architectural forms indicate familiarity with such movement. While unsure what the entirety of the ancient architecture of Nan Madol looked like, records from the 1800's describe wood component structures upon the stone islands and bases. We may assume that similar structures predate this record. One example is the *nah* or meeting house which also references tectonic translations as mentioned in the 'boat to buildings' section. This early Pohnpeian meeting house is constructed as an oblong square and u-shape measuring 49' x 70,' while typical dwelligs ranged from 40'x 20' down to 10' x 6'. Its construction consists of bamboo upon a stone platform, "the various beams and uprights being fastend with party colored twine (like the canoe) made from the bark of the cocoa nut," thatch made from pandus, and wicker work reeds to cover the floor and sides (up to 4 feet)[123] (Fig. 65 and Fig. 66).

Reminiscent of Nan Madol's structures and in a similar tradition to the architectural placement upon stone foundations, modern houses in the coastal town Peinlolung are also being built upon ancient platforms. This practice of placing new structures upon old monuments acts to spatially (and formally) connect generations through juxtaposition, and highlights the negotiation of multiple influences; including cultural, spatial, and varied available resources (Fig. 67). Similarly, this example characterizes the global and local in dialogue through spatial appropriations and juxtapostion [124] and it shows the evolution of a sea-informed oceanic architecture taking place upon a varied landscape (Fig. 68 shows a condensed versions of this evolution).

[123] William N. Morgan, *Prehistoric Architecture in Micronesia*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), 50-51.
[124] Ibid., 81.



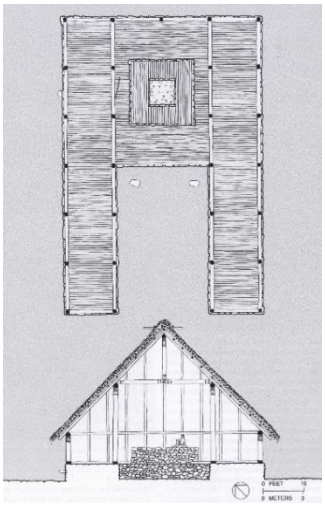


Fig. 65 *Photograph of a house on Nan Madol's Usendau Islet (see Fig. 57 for reference)*

Fig. 66 *The 'nahs' of Usennamw islet, Nan Madol (see Fig. 57 for reference)*

Fig. 67 *Photograph of the house at Peinlolung, Pohnpei.*

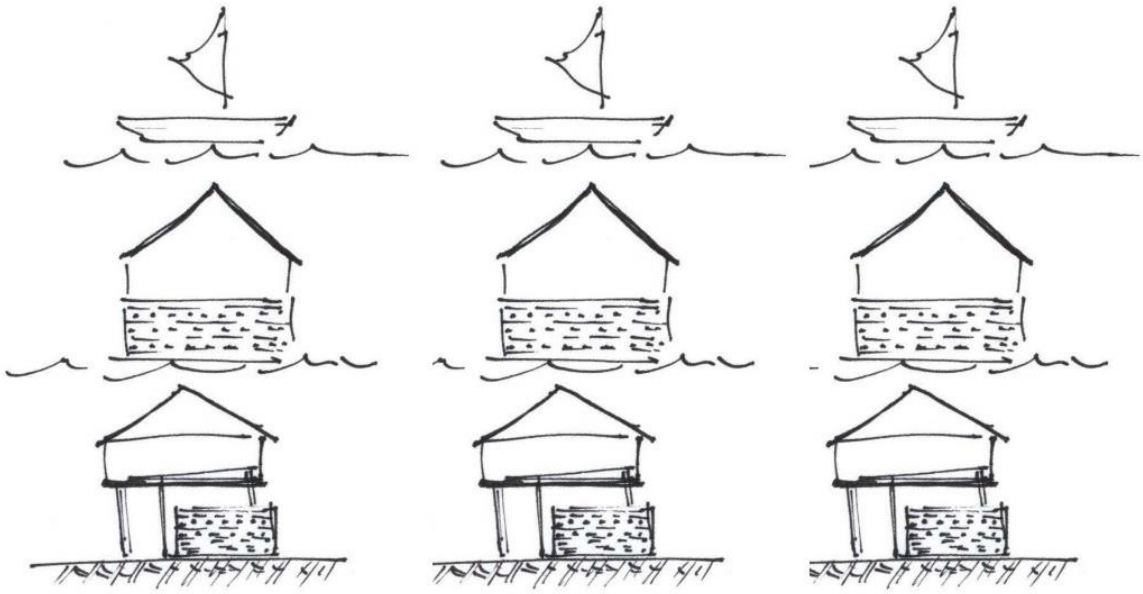


Fig. 68 *Image depicts a condensed translation of boat to building in association with Nan Madol, Pohnpei.*

3.5.2.4 Vanuatu: Tree and Canoe

Joël Bonnemaison's metaphor of the tree and canoe tackles the relationship of man's rootedness and mobility. Traditional mobility is based in territoriality whether it occurs over land or sea. The routes and places appropriated by social groups were essential parts of identity. Bonnemaison says, "If identity is inherited through place, it is also reproduced and deepened with each generation through territorial mobility of a circular type occurring along itineraries of alliance."[125] These patterns of mobility and identity are showcased in the following narrative of the canoe and the appropriation of a sea informed territoriality to land.

[125] Joel Bonnemaison, *The tree and the canoe: history and ethnography of Tanna,* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 345.

In the island grouping of Vanuatu on the island of Tanna there is a narrative that the canoes from the original sea voyage established the structure of social organization upon the land. The canoe is used as a metaphor of social space, which is "enclosed but mobile" and separate with communal and reciprocal functioning. The narrative indicates that the land of Tanna was divided into territories according to clans. Each clan was represented by a canoe and connected by a common mythical ancestor.[126] The canoe's social and operative construction and function has a correlative relationship with the structures created upon the land, and symbolically form a "land canoe," a spatial representation of a canoe/sea informed perspective on social networks of territories and spaces connected by "alliance roads" (Fig. 69).[127] This is another evidence of the Oceanic Phenomenon; it illustrates principles of Oceanic interconnectedness, a "sea of islands" view and a spatial response to mobile realities of flow and flux. Canoe patterns of mobility traverse oceanic waterways to connect people and lands. The created network of in-between space accommodates and is formed by the fluctuation of movement or flows across these spaces. The land canoe diagram translates as another potential "sea of islands" diagram, with territories foregrounded by networked space in-between indicating mobility. Spatial structures continue to represent themselves via their pathways of connection.

We can also see principles of the Oceanic Phenomenon evidenced in the social organization of the canoe in this example. The canoe was guided by a "lord", a "master of prestige and exchange" at the front of the canoe, and a *yani niko* or canoe master and

[126] Joel Bonnemaison, "The Tree and the Canoe: Roots and Mobility in Vanuatu Societies," in *Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 26, Number 1, (April 1985), 43-6.
[127] Ibid., 44.

steersman who directed the journey and destiny of the group upon the land as "the guardian of the territory and its boundaries."[128] The two prominent and guiding figures of the canoe enliven the concepts of exchange and boundary related to the Oceanic Phenomenon, and reinforce the role of these concepts as drivers of spatial organization and architecture.

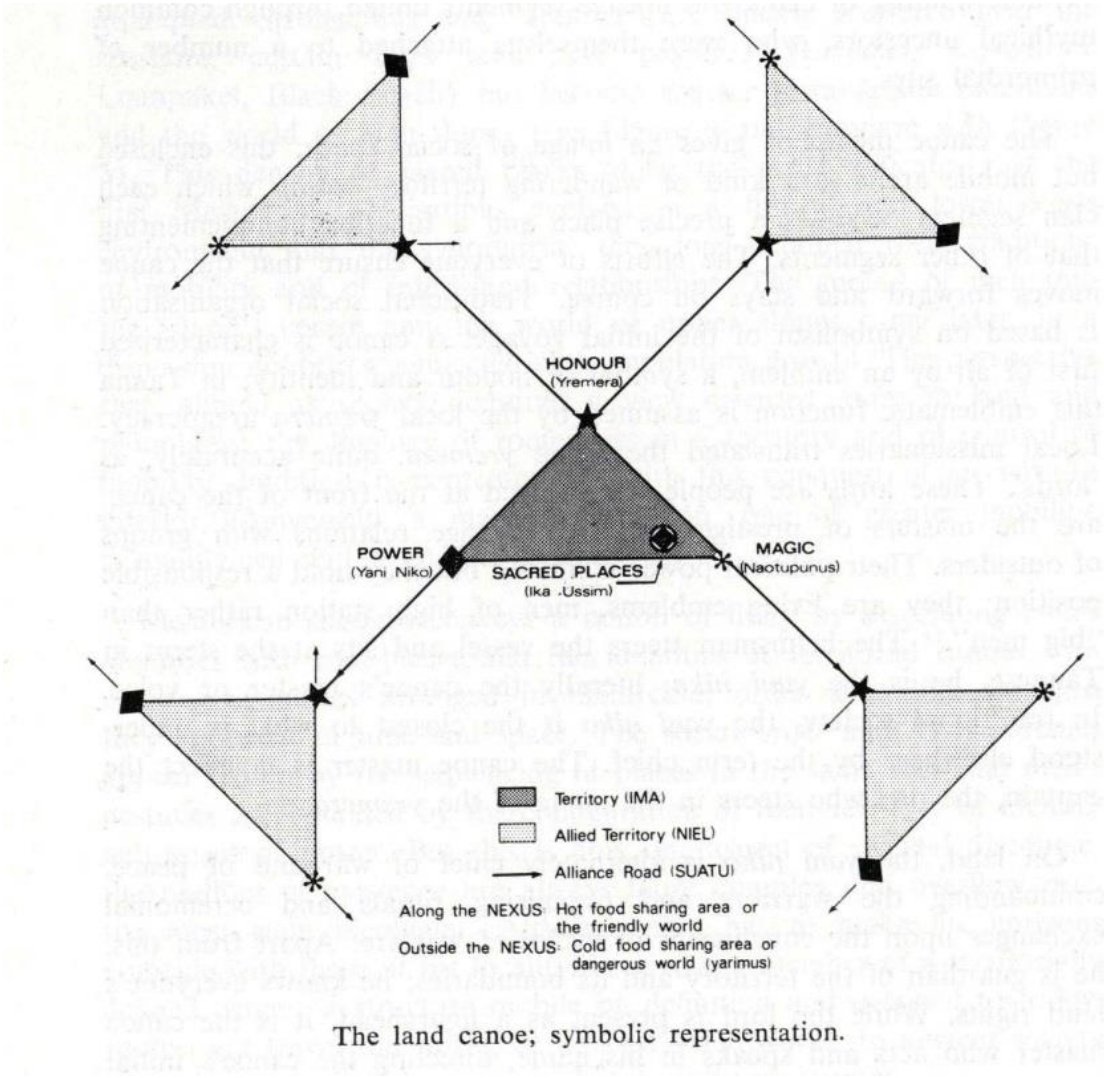


Fig. 69 *Land Canoe diagram*

[128] Ibid., 43.

3.5.3 Maps of the Ocean

In an ocean so vast, to find one's way was no simple matter. It required a memory and reflex to the ocean. Those living along the Pacific Rim have constant reminders of an Oceanic heritage. In Thailand, this heritage is marked by the "aqueous imagery" found on forms of both water and land. In Indonesia, the people "retain a definite marine approach to land with their strong sense of direction."[129] And within Micronesia, the Marshallese people created maps of the ocean as tools for navigation.

In Oceania, there are hundreds of atolls, tiny in size and difficult to see on the horizon. To arrive at a destination requires a sailor's attention to both ocean and sky. Sailors learned the patterns of their seascape, its dimensions, movements and the marks which signal interaction with land. Successful navigation requires an enlarged perspective and memory. [130] The ocean as a pathway for connection facilitates the underlying cultural values of interconnectivity.

The people of the Marshall Islands create stick charts (Fig. 72 and Fig. 73) as maps or "memory aids" of ocean patterns. The charts are made of sticks of coconut midrib tied together with cowrie shells, which represent atolls, and are similar in form and structure to Southeast Asian traditions (Fig. 70 and Fig. 71). [131] These charts "don't indicate precise distances between locations, they are tools that show swell patterns and their disruptions around islands."[132] There are three types, these include the *mattang*

[129] Sumet Jumsai, *Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam and the West Pacific*, (Bangkok: Chalermnit Press & DD Books, 1997), 61.
[130] Peter Brunt et al. *Art in Oceania: A New History*, (New haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 56-57.
[131] Sumet Jumsai, *Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam and the West Pacific*, (Bangkok: Chalermnit Press & DD Books, 1997), 62-64.
[132] Peter Brunt et al. *Art in Oceania: A New History*, (New haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 56-57.

(Fig. 72), a symmetrical chart that is "an abstract instructional model that shows ocean swell patterns and highlights a simple set of conditions," the *meddo* (Fig. 73), which "shows swell patterns in relation to a few islands," and the *rebbilib*, which "shows the positions of many more islands within the Marshallese group."[133] These stick maps also show tectonic wood lashing techniques, which assist in the representation of spatial realities of the ocean.

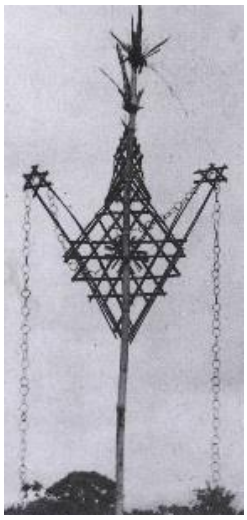


Fig. 70 *Bamboo property marker, Thailand*

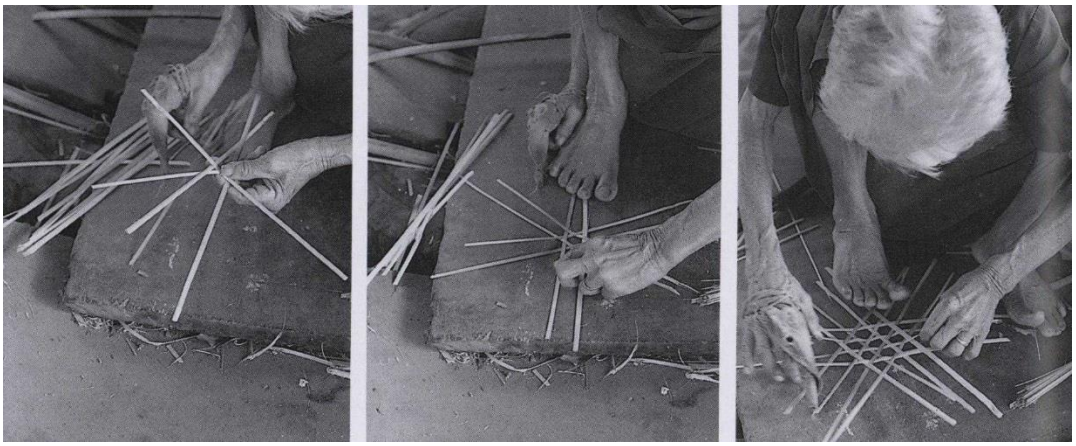
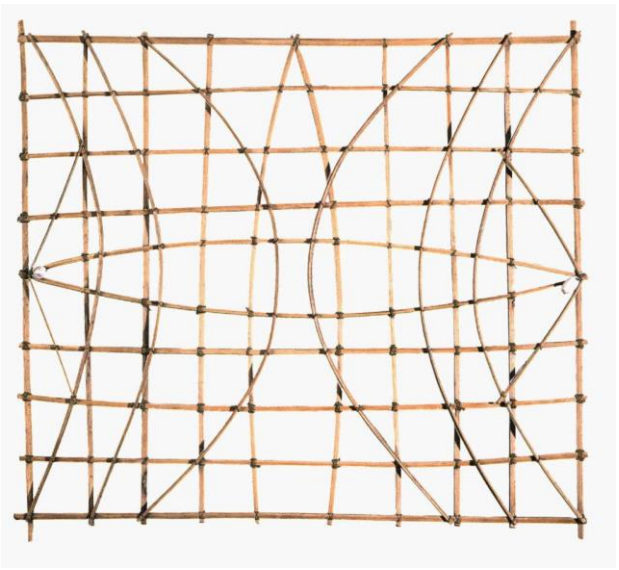


Fig. 71 *Creating a 3-way lattice*

[133] Ibid.



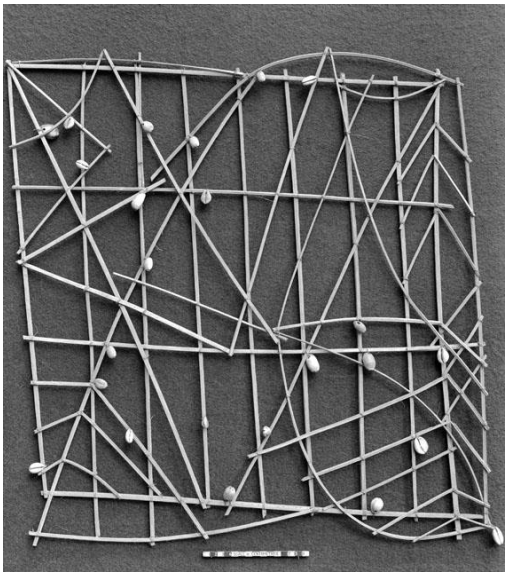


Fig. 72 *a mattang* stick chart ***Fig. 73*** *meddo stick charts*

The Micronesian stick charts illustrate that historically Pacific peoples knew their seascape and its lands, not just its properties and presence, but how it connected peoples and islands. They reference and facilitate a tradition of mobility, movement, and interconnectedness. We can also see similar traditions represented using contemporary mapping techniques. The map of trade and cultural exchange in northern central Vanuatu shows traditional exchange route patterns, networks and voyages (Fig. 74). The movement and pathways represented on this map are similar to patterns of exchange, which occurred in the Kula Ring in Melanesia. The Kula Ring is a system, which evidences long histories of connection and exchange. Herein, patterns and circulation of bracelets and necklaces have led to networks of economic and social relationships across time and space.[134]

[134] Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, (New York: EP Dutton, 1922).

The aforementioned maps each show in their own way the network of space and relations, and perceptions of environment which alters and expands the view of region beyond what land-locked continental and colonized views afford.

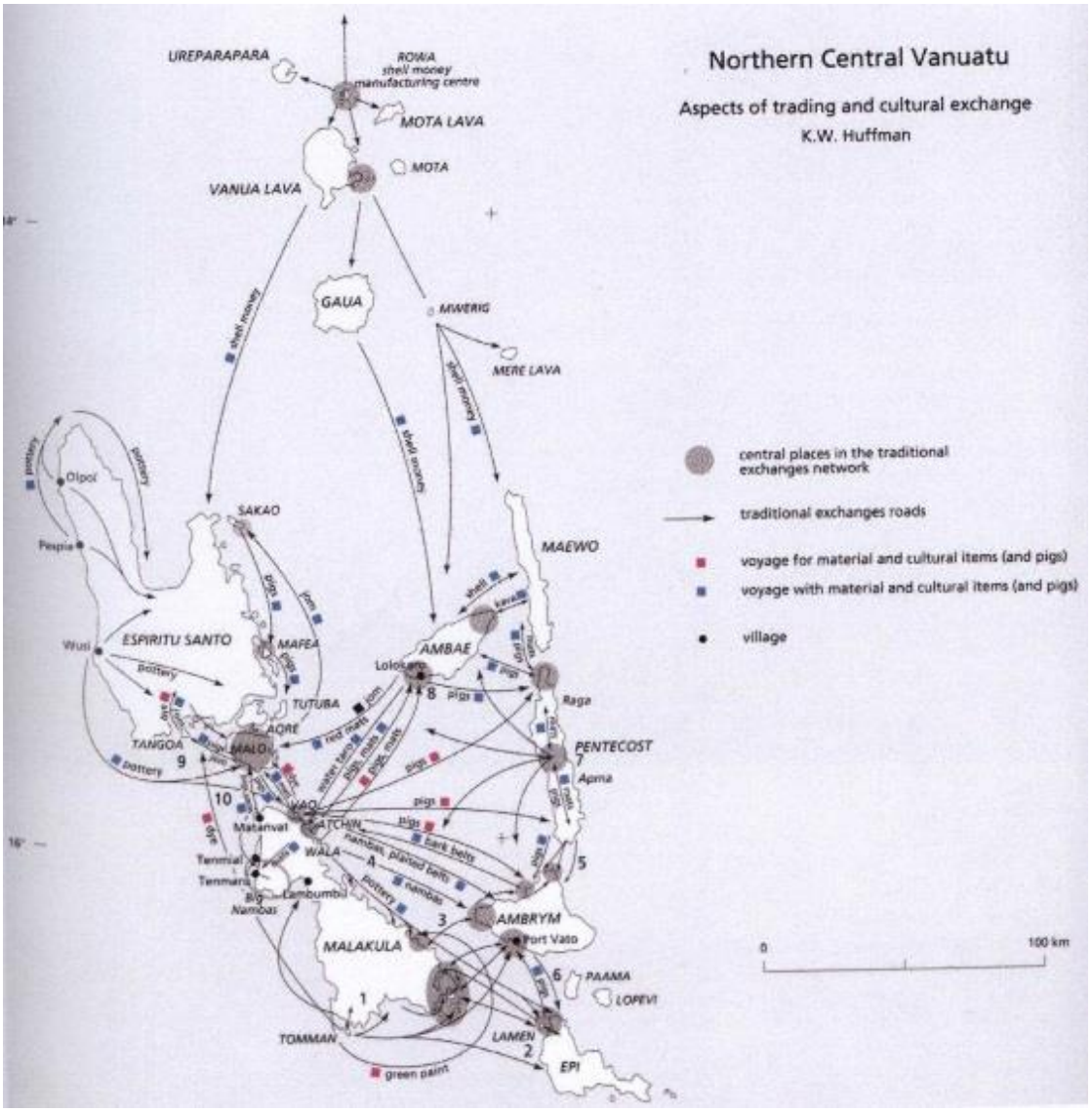


Fig. 74 *Map of Northern Central Vanuatu: Aspects of tradition and cultural exchange*

This sampling of text and poetry, architectural and spatial practices, and maps of the ocean, show the realities of an oceanic perspective and the subsequent conception of space and architectural form based upon factors of interconnectedness; of mobility—flow and flux and resulting multiplicity. The presentation of this phenomenon provides an advancing (or Avant) and enlarged perspective from which we might begin to view new possibilities for regionalism, regional architectural, and spatial practices.

4. In Pursuit of an Avant Regionalism

If regionalism and critical regionalism are historically bound to ideas of landscape, they can also be seen as counter posed to notions of the Avant-garde. I do not use the term in the radical way modernism has used the Avant-garde, and in spite of the inherent irony of the word, I prefer instead to use it as a tool to signify accommodation and an offensive strategy towards the expansion of the regionalist and critical regionalist discussion. I have adopted the term *Avant* to suggest something progressive and moving forward that accounts for the dynamic identifiable in both globalization and the Oceanic Phenomenon.

4.1 An Altered View of Regionalism

As the preceding examples seek to show oceanic networks and connectivity in literature, architectural and spatial practices, and maps of the ocean, they bring to life an unattended perspective and realization of a regional classifier. This standpoint presents an altered vantage point of regionalism and space from which I can pursue an Avant Regionalism.

An altered view of regionalism pulls from the Pacific regional realities and processes that have been occurring for thousands of years, and which also occur today; it is not concocted nor imposed. It is a perspective that has yet to be considered; it

confronts and holds potential for a rewriting of the dominant narrative of critical regionalism.

The world's cultural landscape is different from what it has been previously. Globalization alters our "scapes."[135] The constructs of landscape in modern globalization and in Oceania are expanded by altered "ethnoscapes,"[136] and a dynamic regional heterogeneity characterizes identities of people and place. Using the oceanic perspective, region or the regional is no longer seen as bounded, isolated, stranded nor stabilized by homogeneity of people or place. Like globalization, it challenges the role which regionalism assumed during western colonization.

One of the ways culture can find a role in regionalism is by informing and mediating globalization via spatial sensibilities. Oceanic transformations and spatial sensibilities find parallels with the contemporary flows and flux of the global scapes. Attention to these transformations and sensibilities allow us to separate ourselves from the land-locked conception of region to explore new ways of thinking about architecture and regionalism in a contemporary global setting, a setting where juxtapositions and hybrids can be seen as critical constructors of time and space.

The Oceanic Phenomenon pulls both regionalism and globalization together from their positions as opposites, into "some uneasy neighborliness," working together, illuminating and benefiting from each other. The relationship the Oceanic Phenomenon facilitates is interesting because one of the primary principles of the Pacific is that of

[135] Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization, and Modernity,* (London: Sage, 1990), 220.
[136] Ibid., 221.

reciprocity (or mutual exchange).[137] In this, we see how the principles of oceanic peoples can be translated into different scales and topics of understanding, and in a way re-humanize and create a reciprocal relationship between regionalism and globalization. This may open up the possibility for an altered and reciprocal architecture.

4.2 From the Oceanic Phenomenon to Avant Regionalism

The Oceanic Phenomenon gives attention and credit to an often-disregarded section of the world. It posits that the ocean represents flow, a continual interchange and exchange of principles, goods, and kinship networks. It seeks to highlight a flowing and dynamic sea informed perspective of region that is not defined solely by land, but by a land-sea continuum that operates by fluid pathways, networks, and spatial structures, which emerge from its circular and perpetual movement. The Oceanic Phenomenon moving towards an Avant regionalism is fluid, progressive, and open.

The Oceanic Phenomenon emerges out of the critical strategies of reflection and reflexivity.[138] The patterns of movement we see in the Pacific have the potential to transform our perceptions of the world, or at least our perceptions of region. The Oceanic Phenomenon parallels the pursuit of an Avant Regionalism, as each term pushes us beyond present understandings and perspectives, and beyond the dominant land-locked view of regionalism and the fixities of the enduring view.

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[137] Steven R. Kleinedler et at., "Reciprocity," in *The American Heritage College dictionary*, Fourth Edition, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), 1162.
[138] Kazys Varnelis, "Ethics after the avant-garde: The Critical, the post-critical and beyond," in *Architecture, Ethics and Globalization*, ed. Graham Owen (London: Routledge, 2009), 154.

In this section, I confront existing regional ideas rooted in continental thought and propose that we extend our conceptions and consciousness of space to include Pacific realities and ways of thinking about place. And regionalism in general connotes a spatial conception and consciousness as I have argued here.

Within the discipline of architecture, regionalism is one of the primary views to which those with humanistic sensibilities gravitate. The term oceanic regionalism provides an ocean informed perspective of region, which highlights movement (flow and flux), and multiplicity of people, and seeks to form a space based upon subsequent socio-cultural manifestations. As regionalism is confronted with an oceanic perspective and pattern of place, it becomes necessary to reform the regional perspective. Oceanic regionalism enlarges the view of regionalism, enlivens it with cultural patterns that have been excluded by an emphasis on bounded space, and operates as a hybrid.

An oceanic regionalism enlarges both a view of the oceanic world and the contemporary global world. For while the region may be vast, there exists an integrated spatial dynamic just as we see with globalization. It also enlarges the discourse of regionalism and offers how such a large and ocean filled area functions as a region and maintains a regional identity in a sea of change and flux. It makes a shift in focus from land-based conceptions and confinements of region, to a broadened inclusive regionalism with more focus on connection rather than delineation and boundary. While geographic and physical scapes give form and characterization to this view, networks of relation that connect, maintain, and expand, via structures of kinship, technology, economy, values

and beliefs, give it root and functionality. Each of these networks of relations fluidly flow across the varying "scapes"[139] of contemporary life.

Processes of concocting regional space and architecture should include socio-cultural and ecological realities of region, not just an orientation to the physical environment of a place and modern realities. The oceanic view repositions any retreat into environmental qualities of bounded place towards a cultural-ecological view (dealing with interactions between people and environment). It identifies place (the point of interaction) or region as a cultural composition of porous boundaries and accommodating cultural complexities, flows and flux. It is identifiable by hybridizations and juxtapositions which emerge from such interactions.

Social networks via cultural connections produce an interesting realm of space; an unbounded space, a porous space-- perhaps what we may refer to as an oceanic regional space. Joel Bonnemaison, a cultural geographer, was one of the few who "invested in exploring cultural differences in spatial sensibility."[140] His studies in Melanesia affirm the reality of networks as expressed in the Oceanic Phenomenon. He acknowledges such lines of thinking as separate from traditionally prescribed western prescriptions of regions as owned sectors or territories. As he articulates, "their reliance on reticulated (networked) space or places drawn together by …symbolic significance, contrasts with the hierarchical organization of space associated with state-based Western territoriality and spatial networks."[141]

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[139] Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization, and Modernity,* (London: Sage, 1990), 220.
[140] Joel Bonnemaison, "Introduction to the English Edition by John Agnew," in *Culture and Space: Conceiving a new Cultural Geography,* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), XI.
[141] Ibid., XIII.

On a similar note, Hau'ofa keys into enduring Pacific patterns and spatial networks that continue to operate silently and independently of the restrictions of Western prescriptions, continental and land-locked views of regionalism. Imposed views of regionalism and identity based upon the aforementioned notions of territoriality and the related "islands in a far sea" view, ignore natural flows, separate, and isolate Pacific peoples from each other. This 'other' description of place has overshadowed the realities of region, forcing an unbounded cultural landscape to operate under and within bounded land notions of delineated space.

Oceanic regionalism then operates to help us extend beyond regional molds of territoriality and bounded space. It acts as a hybrid pulling together spatial understandings of patterns and principles of the Oceanic Phenomenon and regionalism, while offering an alternate view for architecture and an *Avant* strategy for identifying the regional.

By pursuing the Oceanic Phenomenon, I am also in pursuit of Avant Regionalism. This renewed perspective provides access to spatial structures via merging understandings of critical regionalism and the Oceanic Phenomenon. At the heart of this transition is a critique of the emphasis critical regionalism places on environmental/geographical design concepts to the neglect of cultural and social interrelationships as an effective regional identifier. In response, the Oceanic Phenomenon presents a critique and proposal, which then enlivens a neglected culturally informed view of regionalism that can be applied to revive and renew the regional towards an Avant Regionalism. It offers an opportunity for shifting attention towards an altered and enlarging worldview for continental and land-locked perspectives.

4.3 From Critical Regionalism to Avant Regionalism

Like critical regionalism, I seek to "mediate the impact of universal civilization,"[142] to take a different perspective and approach that extends the discussion and application of its principles. In this section, I seek to resituate the regional discourse in what I call "In pursuit of an Avant-Regionalism."

The Avant-garde sets forth a notion of being critical of the other and the self. Relatedly, the addition of critical to regionalism took on the notion of criticality, and made it a point to be critical of the global (the other) and the local (the self). Embracing its roots, critical regionalism recognized the shortcomings of architectural modernism to fulfill the Avant-garde's progressive notions of criticality, to employ an objective resistance (to the other) and address specifics of a region (the self). It sought to be critical of world trends of uniformity and universalization of form and image (the other), and it sought to be critical of regionalism and not dissolve into historicism (the self).

Tzonis and Lefaivre's proposal for a critical regionalism in the 1980s became another point in the dialogue of architectural history as it sought to address the prevalence of a growing identity crisis fueled by modernism and universalization in the wake of globalization. In recognizing that universalization of architecture failed to cater to the peculiarities of place and peoples, it sought instead to use architecture to acknowledge identity and to attend to concerns about where one is and how one lives locally in contrast to global presences impacting local realities. Yet in application, the solutions seem to retreat to primarily a management of the global by attending to specific environmental

[142] Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Post Modern Culture,* ed. Hal Foster. (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983), 21.

qualities of place, which Hawai'i architect Vladimir Ossipoff more appropriately refers to as mediating nature and the contemporary.[143] The mediation of the local and global repeatedly returns to focus on nature and the tectonic to solve the problem of a dissipating regional identity, rather than turning to people and socio-cultural processes and patterns as the source towards solutions for identity and place. The physical, tectonic and natural is important in the characterization of place. But is nature and climatic orientation the only solution to mediating prevailing global presences? Does it remedy the displacement of identity and the modern self? And what role does region play in defining or negotiating global processes and structures of identity? These are key questions to this research with no simple or direct answers.

Frampton sought to articulate critical regionalism as "a style of thought and approach," a "method or process rather than a product," or "formal style" confronting the prescriptive point geared product and image found in the modernist movement. This he thinks, responds to the variability of circumstance.[144] His proposal is to create a balance between the local and the modern, in hopes of sustaining the victories of modernism and using local characteristics to surpass its shortcomings. Frampton attempts to highlight a resistance of the global by using the local characteristic of site to push for varied identity while maintaining an orientation to modernism. However, architectural historian Keith Eggener argues, that Frampton's process and approach instead "discriminatingly,

[143] Dean Sakamoto, et al., *Hawaiian Modernism: The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff, (*New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 127-142.
[144] Keith L. Eggener, "Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism," *Journal of Architectural Education (1984-)* Vol. 55. No. 4 (May, 2002):228,233.

identified, abstracted, and melded local physical and cultural characteristics with more ubiquitous, modern practices, technologies, and economic and material conditions."[145]

In spite of its own shortcomings, critical regionalism has set up a valuable platform and ideology from which to expand and extend notions of regionalism in architecture. The extension to pursue an Avant Regionalism is not oppositional to critical regionalism, for it embraces a similar criticality of addressing origins, constraints, and conflicts in architecture related to "globalization and international intervention" and "local identity, and the desire for ethnic insularity."[146] It comments on outside imposing forces and seeks an emancipatory tool to alleviate imposing architectural formulas upon spatial, social and cultural identity.[147] The Avant-garde facilitates this critical stance and pushes beyond the status quo.

4.3.1 A Shift

In the paper *Edward Said and the Avant-Garde,* author David LeHardy Sweet claims that literary theorist [Edward] "Said indirectly persuades us that the Avant-garde's own originality is not to be found in its expressive means or formal innovations, but in its critical motivations or beginnings." It rejects fundamentals of tradition and attaches to uncertainty and "worldly circumstances" or transitory circumstances. [148] What motivates

[145] Ibid., 229.
[146] Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, *Critical Regionalism: Architecture and Identity in a Globalized World,* (Munich: Prestel, 2003), 10.
[147] Ibid., 11.
[148] David LeHardy Sweet, "Edward Said and the Avant-Garde," *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics,* No. 25, Edward Said and Critical Decolonization: 156, accessed Mar 18, 2013 http://www.jstor.org/stable/4047455

the shift of this research is a focus upon a transitory reality. To obtain a better understanding of the Avant and this proposed expansion of regionalism, it is necessary to turn to some of the critical beginnings of this project to discover its informed originality.

Lewis Mumford provides the critical beginnings to a pursuit of an Avant Regionalism. In the book, *Hawaiian Modern,* Karla Britton reviews Mumford's ideas related to his visit and exploration of Hawai'i in 1938. At this point in time Honolulu was viewed as "a site of interchange between global modernization and the regional peculiarities of its geographic location." As quoted by Britton, "much of Mumford's attraction to Honolulu was bound up in Hawai'i's remarkable 'hybridization of cultures'" and "the cultural complexities of this amalgam suggested to him a place that would 'mark the future development of human society.'"[149] Although Mumford keys in to the prevalent role of culture as related to place, he simultaneously proposes ideas for planning in Honolulu focused solely on the physical characteristics of place as elements of identity: water, temperate climate, characterized dampness and lush tropical vegetation.[150] He seems to abandon Hawaii's remarkable composition of culture altogether; the one feature that would "mark the future development of human society" for which he advocated.[151]

In line with Mumford's attention to the importance of Hawai'i's hybrid culture as a potent pathway for architectural development, his book *The South in Architecture*

[149] Lewis Mumford, "Report on Honolulu," in *City Development: Studies in Disintegration and Renewal,* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1973), 90.
[150] Dean Sakamoto, et al., *Hawaiian Modernism: The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff, (*New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 132.

[151] Lewis Mumford, "Report on Honolulu," in *City Development: Studies in Disintegration and Renewal,* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1973), 90.

argues that, as culture and identity are mutable and conditional,[152] architectural expression must seek to accommodate this reality. Mumford continues, "Regionalism is not a matter of using the most available local material, or of copying some simple form of construction that our ancestors used, for want of anything better, a century or two ago. Regional forms are those which most closely meet the actual conditions of life and which most fully succeed in making a people feel at home in their environment: they do not merely utilize the soil but they reflect the current conditions of culture in the region."[153] Critical regionalism did attempt to revive an orientation and application of local characteristics into architecture. However, it fell short because it unknowingly was operating within a land-locked conception while the world's surrounding "scapes" were expanding and connecting.

I challenge regionalism and critical regionalism because of the land-locked view it singly upholds, participates in, and perpetuates towards a shrinking of worlds via bounded views of place. This view or dominant narrative is not wrong, but it offers only a single faceted story, a line of thinking that silently guides some of the relatively permanent architectural compositions and urban scapes of the world. It would be appropriate if that were the dynamic of the world we live in—a single faceted world. But that is not the reality in a world of global mixing occurring at both macro and micro scales. We need to think about our landscape differently, perhaps as a 'glocal' spatiality.

One of the primary differences between a critical regionalism and an Avant-Regionalism lays in its aims. Critical regionalism takes up a discussion that seeks to

[152] Keith L. Eggener, "Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism," *Journal of Architectural Education (1984-)* Vol. 55. No. 4 (May, 2002):228.
[153] Lewis Mumford, *The South in Architecture,* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1941), 30.

mediate the global and local and their oppositional relationship, and relies upon principles of incorporation to achieve identity autonomy. A "regionalist architecture incorporates regional elements in order to represent aspirations of liberation from a power perceived as alien and illegitimate."[154] Avant regionalism tries instead to impede the universally imposed illegitimate suppositions and impositions and says 'no, you do not dictate the realm of my region, the expanse of my networks.' It seeks to alter the confines of how we view the region and alter imposed boundaries as definers of region. It seeks also to alter boundaries that emphasize bound landscape and physical environment as the primary drivers of 'regional' architecture. And it places greater focus on the constructs of the cultural landscape and the spatial networks that form links within and without; similar to what is presented about the Oceanic Phenomenon.

In a way, Avant Regionalism disrupts the definition of regionalism as we have come to interpret it, that which pertains to or is loyal to a particular region.[155] It breaks down the traditional boundaries and notions of how we think of regionalism, and repositions its loyalties from previous definitions and delineations of region. Architects have assumed that to be loyal to region, we must incorporate physical elements of place and propose design concepts from the 'unchanging' landscape. But we diminish, neglect, and push aside the human part of architectural regionalism. Avant Regionalism attends to and is loyal to a conception of region as flow and flux that expands and contracts, to

[154] Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, *Architecture of Regionalism in an Age of Globalization*, (New York: Routledge, 2013).
[155] Steven R. Kleinedler et al., "Regionalism," in *The American Heritage College dictionary*, Fourth Edition, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), 1171.

accommodate social and human networks, and their spatial and architectural manifestations.

The focus of this pursuit is not to perpetuate a resistance between the global and local. Instead, it focuses is on how globalization and regionalism, or the global and the local, can assist in the design of architectural structures and perpetuate its patterns. We learn from the oppositions in history and architecture. We observe the juxtapositions and hybrids of architecture and place, past and present, to discover patterns which can assist us in advancing forward our values, our interactions, our communities, our architecture and our practice.

4.4 The Value of an Altered Regionalism

What is the value of a shift towards an Avant Regionalism which has been informed by the Oceanic Phenomenon? We make the shift to push on beyond where we cannot stay. We make the shift to advance the ground of critical regionalism as it succumbed to applications based primarily on environmental and architectonic expressions. Mumford's early discussions of regionalism did not place the local and global in opposition, instead he viewed them as interrelated entities that engage with and can benefit from each other.

As mentioned before, the Avant-garde needed a critical consciousness of reality, not just a critique of history. The Avant adds to regionalism an emphasis on the

importance of "direct experience," "immediacy,"[156] and a consciousness of history relative to present realities. And it foregrounds the importance of multiplicity inherent in our realities that will lead to the progression and advancement that "mark the future development"[157] of architecture education, design and practice. The Avant offers critical regionalism a departure from itself, just as the Oceanic Phenomenon offers a departure from a land-locked regionalism.

When the regional realities of life become increasingly connected to a 'glocal' scape, the tools (or views) and ways that built and contained the local landscape will not suffice, and so we look towards a restructuring of this containment through the pursuit of an Avant Regionalism. In so doing we have identified the land-locked view of regionalism, and have expanded the view by incorporating an oceanic perspective that presents a new cultural-ecological consciousness.

4.5 3 Points for an Avant Regionalism

Avant + Regionalism is a hybrid. It gathers two theories or lines of thought into one. The two may be perceived as divergent-- with Avant advancing towards the future and the unknown, and regionalism upholding past classifications and delineations of defined landscape/world-scape. In partnership, the two ironically act as a dynamic duo to alter our upheld notions of regionalism and advance us toward the future with new

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[156] David LeHardy Sweet, Edward Said and the Avant-Garde," in *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, No. 25, Edward Said and Critical Decolonization: 156, accessed March 18, 2013 http://www.jstor.org/stable/4047455.

[157] Lewis Mumford, "Report on Honolulu," in *City Development: Studies in Disintegration and Renewal*, (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1973), 90.

perspectives, while also grounding us in sustained principles and dynamic realities of place.

The Oceanic Phenomenon and its analogous relationship with contemporary global networks and scapes, and their subtleties of fluidity and flux, support the marriage of the terms to form an Avant Regionalism. This perspective,

1. Critiques and Opens up Critical Regionalism
2. Presents a New Ecological and Cultural-Ecological Consciousness
3. Merits Poly-cultures and multiplicity

1. Critiques and Opens up Critical Regionalism

The initial pursuit towards an Avant Regionalism places a check on critical regionalism and opens it up by presenting a new critical space via a confrontation with old models of region. This paper has furnished the provisional evidence of this claim in its preceding arguments. In summary,

-Avant Regionalism identifies critical regionalism as a land-locked view.

-Avant Regionalism places a check upon and opens up the critical regionalist discourse using the Oceanic Phenomenon.

2. Presents a New Ecological and Cultural-Ecological Consciousness

The pursuit of an Avant Regionalism via the Oceanic Phenomenon leads to the proposal of a new ecological consciousness for regionalism and simultaneously presents

two new and linked concepts of ecology for architecture. First, it presents a new 'hydrographical' consciousness of space. Secondly, a new cultural-ecological consciousness provides an altered view to approach the design of regional architecture.

Human ecology is concerned with human-environment interaction. A cultural ecological consciousness considers cultural elements as they relate with and results from this interaction. The process of critiquing regionalism and simultaneously exploring and likening oceanic and global cultures has resulted in a new, oceanic consciousness of ecology (human-environment interaction) and a perceiving of architectural space. It has concurrently helped me recognize that existing regional architecture reveals its own ecological view and perpetuates a sure and single view of regionalism.

3. Merits Poly-cultures and Multiplicity

Like Polynesia with its many islands and cultures, the Avant Regional foregrounds multiplicity. An Avant Regionalism values poly-cultures instead of monocultures, heterogeneity over homogeneity, because within the Oceanic Phenomenon that is what has occurred historically and continues to occur; an intermixing and networking of peoples and cultures. "Around the world one finds that instead of Western homogenization, there has been instead a great deal of selective adoption and rejection, customization and 'cultural creolization.'"[158] A regionalism that transcends pre-imposed

[158] Victoria S. Lockwood, "The Global Imperative and Pacific Island Societies," in *Globalization and Culture change in the Pacific Islands,* ed. Victoria S. Lockwood (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2004), 7.

boundaries and classifications reveals a greater trend towards cultural multiplicity and mixing.

In consideration of multiplicity, J. Rifken's book "The Third Industrial Revolution" presents a new projection of industry which acknowledges the reality and need to address multiplicity through architecture. While the first industrial revolution was about mechanization and the second about mass production and consumption, this third industrial revolution is more focused on "public-interest design" and the development of "low-cost, culturally appropriate solutions" which "shift (us) from an economy of mass production and consumption to an economy based on mass customization."[159]

If our world truly exists within networks of flow and multiplicity, then it only makes sense that our architecture should follow suite. Thus, the best way to design for multiplicity is not through the single faceted, but by consideration of the multiple, and perhaps a movement towards customization.

[159] Thomas Fischer, "Architecture and the Third Industrial Revolution," *Architect,* January 24, 2014. Accessed January 2014, http://www.architectmagazine.com/urban-design/architecture-and-the-third-industrial-revolution_o.aspx.

5. A Conclusive Opening

I offer critical regionalism a critique and an opening of the discourse via the Oceanic Phenomenon and an enlarged perspective towards an advancing regionalism.

Kahuku and the juxtaposition of form and space at this junction has led me to look a little further into Mumford and the actual conditions of life, the realities of place. Regional architecture seems continuously stalled by a focus on physical realities of place and constrained by a perpetuated narrative of inscribed, land-locked notions of landscape/region. It falls short of addressing changing global realities, which like the Oceanic Phenomenon (that was taking place long before we recognized the globalization process) increasingly reflect perpetual mobility and multiplicity.

The reality in Kahuku is one of multiplicity and manipulation which lead to spatial constructions that show movement and interconnectedness, as a "sea of islands," expressed by the Oceanic Phenomenon. Drawing upon all that has been explored in this paper, Avant Regional architecture would be expressive of networks and an expanded conception of space. One articulation of expanding and networked space might look like this. (Fig. 75)

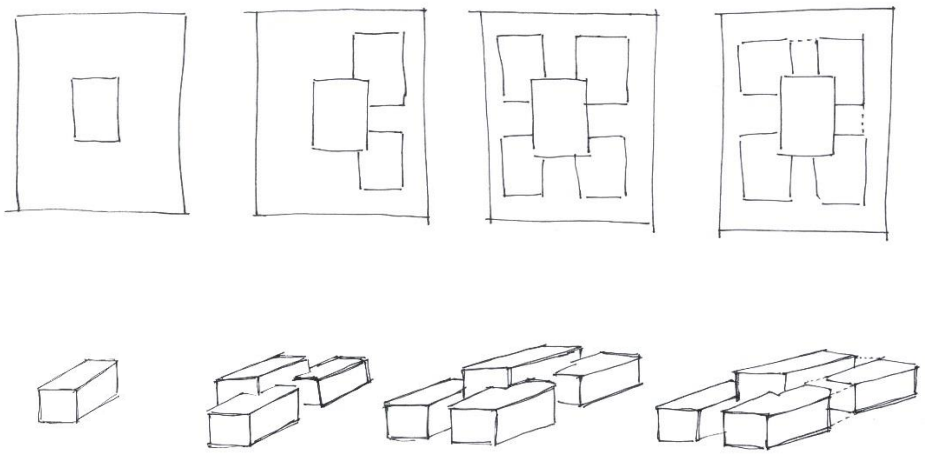
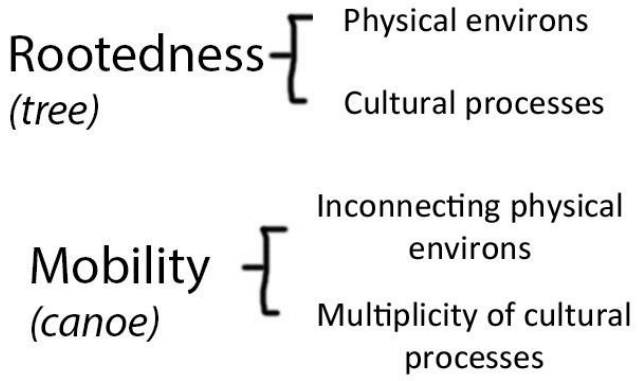


Fig. 75 *Diagram: One example of an expanding and network informed architecture**

While I did not anticipate it, this research addresses the underlying common concept of rootedness and mobility or "the tree and the canoe."[160] Along the way rootedness and the constancy of landscape/physical environment became the premier view point of regionalism, to the neglect of both concepts and views of mobility culture.



[160] Joel Bonnemaison, "The Tree and the Canoe: Roots and Mobility in Vanuatu Societies," in *Pacific Viewpoint,* Vol. 26, Number 1, (April 1985), 30-62.

An Avant Regionalism re-incorporates, via the Oceanic Phenomenon, both mobility and multiplicity in culture into the discourse of regionalism, for our present global and local realities foreground such a need. It shifts the focus from a land-locked regionalism to highlight an oceanic perspective of flow and flux that produce varied hybrid architectural and spatial practices. The fluid constancy and fluctuations of spaces in-between inform the relationship of people to space and environment, to present an altered regional ecology and a poly-cultural composition as a type for region.

The Oceanic Phenomenon then becomes a metaphor to help us rethink all regional assumptions that are bound up in perceptions of land, which have been a roadblock to understanding the regional context of Oceania and by extension, perhaps everywhere.

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